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AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE
NEW TESTAMENT

AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE
NEW TESTAMENT

BY
ADOLF JÜLICHER
//
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARBURG

TRANSLATED BY
JANET PENROSE WARD

WITH
PREFATORY NOTE BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

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1904

cwm

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discovered by me. I shall not dispute priority with anyone on the strength of the present book.

‘As to readers, I only wish for those who regard as justified a *strictly historical* treatment of the study of the New Testament, but, granted this condition, a special theological training is not necessary. On the contrary, I hope to meet a want that undoubtedly exists, outside theological circles, among people of education, by telling the history of the New Testament from its beginnings in the simplest possible way, confining myself to essentials.

‘As this is not an edition of the text, or merely a book of reference, the Index is only meant to facilitate the discovery of items which are not easily to be found in the Table of Contents.’

The above sentences from the Preface to the first edition (1894) are still valid for the present one. The book has been so benevolently judged by theological critics, as well as by the general reader, so far as the judgments of both have reached me, that I have not thought myself at liberty to change anything essential in its form and point of view. If it has unfortunately grown to the extent of some 100 pages, that is merely the result of an increase in the new material which calls for consideration within the old subdivisions. I have not confined myself to the elimination of certain errors of detail which had been pointed out to me, nor to providing a richer and more convenient supply of bibliographical data chiefly in the interests of students, nor to making the treatment of the different sections more strictly uniform. Impelled and enlightened by the contributions which German, English and French writers have made in wonderful fulness and variety to New Testament science precisely during the last six years, I have once more worked through all problems properly belonging to an ‘Introduction,’ and am not ashamed

to say that I have attained to a better insight in many points of importance. But even where that was not the case, I found myself compelled to discuss new questions which had been raised, to put before the reader new proposals that had been offered for the solution of old problems, and generally to make him acquainted with the special circumstances and influences affecting our subject (*Disciplin*) at the opening of the new century.¹ Though I have not altered for the sake of altering, I hope that I have throughout written as I must have written in 1900 if no 1894 had gone before.

The portion of the book which has been subjected to least revision is the history of the Canon: in an *outline* like this there is simply no room for the numerous additions which I would gladly have made. By far the largest share has gone to Part I., the history of the different Books of the New Testament. The Gospel of John and Acts, which had previously come off but poorly, have had justice done them; in the case of the Synoptic Gospels also, the Apocalypse, the Catholic Epistles, and many Pauline Epistles, including the Pastoral Epistles and the Epistle to the Hebrews, as well as in the introductory paragraphs concerning the Apostle Paul, it will be found that I have not ceased to learn.

I have not yet been able to meet the desire expressed by a particularly valued critic that I should open the first chapter with a brief history of Greek epistolary literature: I am unable to perform the task in such a way that the interpretation of Paul's letters would gain thereby. In other cases where I appear to have overlooked certain publicly expressed objections to my 'Introduction,' the reason lies in the firmness of my own conviction,—for instance, that the persons addressed in the Epistle to the Hebrews are not Jewish Christians, and still less natives of Palestine.

¹ The preceding is not an exact translation, but a paraphrase of the German, omitting certain controversial allusions more likely to be understood by German than by English readers.

Only one deficiency in my book have I maintained on principle : one of my critics found it not 'theological' enough. If that meant that I was wanting in love for the subject and in understanding of it, and if I failed to increase both in my readers, that deficiency would be the gravest conceivable. As that is not the meaning, what is asked for must either be a more detailed investigation of the world of religious thought in which the New Testament writers lived, or what is called 'an edifying tone.' It is not for me, however, to trespass on the domain of another science, that of New Testament theology, nor to win praise by a style unsuited to this handbook. I can only hope that in a book which ought to be universally intelligible, I have never allowed myself to be driven on to a false road by the special interests of theology, or the preconceptions of the theological 'Docent'!

THE AUTHOR.

MARBURG : *October* 31, 1900.

PREFATORY NOTE

As a member of that section of the general public to which, no less than to professed students of theology, Dr. Jülicher addresses the book now presented in English dress to English readers, I may perhaps be allowed to say two or three prefatory words. 'I hope,' says Professor Jülicher in his preface to the last edition, 'to meet a want that undoubtedly exists, outside theological circles, among people of education, by telling the history of the New Testament from its beginnings in the simplest possible way, confining myself to essentials.' At the same time the book has been abundantly welcomed by the scholars of its subject. The first edition appeared in 1894; the present translation is made from the second edition; and the references to the 'Introduction' in recent literature show that it has obtained a recognised and honoured place in German theological study. Professor Wrede of Breslau, reviewing the first edition in 1896, says, 'We do not often meet with a theological book which, with so solid a content, is yet so clear and flowing in style . . . which is never tedious and often of absorbing interest.' No doubt the German reader is a more patient and serious being than his English brother, and can be trusted not to confound the

inevitable difficulty of a great and complex subject with obscurity or tedium. Close attention, very close attention, Professor Jülicher does certainly ask of us. But once this has been yielded him, the animated simplicity and sincerity of his method will begin to tell upon us,—the method of a man full of intellectual energy, full also of love for his subject; and we shall soon come to realise the brilliancy of much of his work. It would surely be difficult to find either in English or German a more masterly statement, within reasonable compass, of the Synoptic problem, or of the probable conditions governing the composition of the Fourth Gospel, or of the difficulties that surround the Acts, or, above all, of the History of the Canon and the Text. Everywhere we are in contact with a just and vigorous mind, dealing worthily with a great subject, avoiding indeed all merely edifying talk, and not without a certain sharp and homely plainness on occasion, but well stored all the time with feeling and imagination, and never insincere. Dr. Jülicher employs a method of perfect freedom, but his freedom is no mere cloak for critical license, and his eagerness as critic or historian does not rob him of common sense.

As to his relation to other scholars, all readers of Dr. Harnack will remember that he speaks with special respect of the author of this 'Introduction' in the preface to his own '*Chronologie der althristlichen Literatur.*' When Dr. Weiss on the more conservative side and Professor Jülicher on the liberal side agree, then, says Harnack, it is not necessary for any after-comer to reopen a question. 'In the case of the Pastoral Epistles, I regard the results of Holtzmann and Jülicher as proved,' says the Berlin professor, and he presupposes them in his own discussion. There are, indeed, great differences between the two scholars, as anyone who

studies the treatment of the Johannine problem, or of certain points connected with the Synoptics, in both, will easily recognise. And the judgment of Jülicher on the 'pseud-epigraphical' element in the earliest literature of Christianity is by no means so favourable to the documents as that of Dr. Harnack. But in the main they are not far apart; and at any rate both stand firmly on the same free historical ground, and would hold it a dishonour to approach their work in any other spirit than that of the student and seeker after truth.

In comparison with the great 'Einleitung' of Dr. Holtzmann, the more recent book shows a greater pliancy and simplicity of method, and less Baurian 'vigour and rigour.' Dr. Jülicher is further removed from Tübingen than Dr. Holtzmann. His treatment is 'richer in historical points of view'; his tone more natural and varied; while 'behind the documents he looks to the men and their relations, takes into account the influence of changing moods and circumstances upon a writer,' and relies but sparingly on those fine-drawn arguments based wholly on the details of vocabulary or what may be called the psychology of style, which the critic of to-day will only use when he must. His account of the 'literature' of the subject is much less full than that of Dr. Holtzmann; but he gains thereby greatly in interest and vivacity for the general reader, while for the student the two books complete each other. With Dr. Theodore Zahn, the champion of 'orthodox' criticism in Germany, the 'great misleader'¹ in the theological field, as Dr. Jülicher calls him, this 'Introduction' will be found constantly at feud. Here Jülicher stands on the same ground with Harnack. Zahn's vast and learned work is the antithesis and the denial

¹ 'Irrgärtner,' maker of mazes or labyrinths.

of all that the Berlin and Marburg professors hold true. With whom lies the future? Can anyone doubt, who looks abroad a little over the general forces and tendencies, the efforts and victories of modern historical *Wissenschaft*?

With these few words, then, let me commend this book to those who feel that on these questions, these critical and literary questions, with which it deals, really depends our future Christianity. For numbers of minds in England the mere careful study of Dr. Jülicher's chapters on the Gospels, or on the history of the Canon, would be a liberal education. Pain might enter into it; but it would be the pain of growth. Loss might attend it; but beyond the loss, beyond the onset and the struggle of a fast advancing knowledge there lies a new kingdom of the spirit. The true knowledge of Christ is in no peril: *ducit opes animumque ferro*.

MARY A. WARD.

October 1903.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE Translator wishes to offer her sincere thanks to those who have kindly assisted her in translating or revising the present work: to Miss Margaret Watson, who undertook part of the actual translation, and to Mr. Leonard Huxley, Mr. W. T. Arnold and Professor Percy Gardner, who by their valuable suggestions have greatly lightened what was at times a very difficult task.

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preliminary studies useful to the understanding of the New Testament. Moreover its history shows that no clear and universally recognised conception of its meaning and its place within the complete body of theological knowledge has yet been evolved; probably no single topic exists which has been included in all Introductions to the New Testament without exception. In by far the greater number of the more modern productions we may indeed find researches into the origin of each individual Book of the New Testament and into the history of their collection into a whole; possibly, too, into that of the later dissemination of their texts; but often in addition to these we are confronted by a bewildering array of digressions on questions of dogma, hermeneutics, grammar, lexicography, philology, even of archæology and geography, while other productions of Early Christian literature, such as the First Epistle of Clement, the Epistle of Barnabas, the 'Didaché of the Twelve Apostles,' are included in the survey, and the history traced of the translation and interpretation of the New Testament and of its preservation in the Church and in literature.

We can never hope to construct a uniform whole out of this mass of heterogeneous material. But some such unity is to be obtained by defining Introduction to the New Testament as that branch of the science of history—or more accurately, of the history of literature—which treats of the New Testament. It rests an open question whether the writings of the New Testament properly come under the head of literature in the strict sense of the word; but at all events, it was as literature that their influence was felt. In very truth, this fragment of the world's literature has exerted a greater influence than any other book that has ever been written. To make it the subject of a special scientific study is not merely permissible to a Christian theologian who would advocate the view it takes of life, but is also a duty of the historian, quite apart from considerations of his own faith, because without historical understanding of the New Testament, whole passages of the history of the human spirit become utterly incomprehensible, and others can be but imperfectly understood. We select the history of these

particular twenty-seven books from that of the bulk of early Christian literature—to which they essentially belong—because they and no others have played so great a part in the world's history, not because they may have been the earliest literary product of the Christian spirit. However clearly such documents as the Gospel of Peter, the First Epistle of Clement, or the 'Shepherd' of Hermas may excel certain parts of the New Testament in age or originality, we are not actually obliged to include them in the history of the New Testament except where our understanding of certain problems of literary history raised by the New Testament would be increased by so doing. The 'twin sister of Introduction,' New Testament Theology, is in an entirely different position, inasmuch as it has to seek out its object—the Christian religion as it first arose—from among the whole body of existing authorities, whereas the object of our own study lies ready to our hand.

If, however, from whatever reasons, the limits of the New Testament should be so rigorously drawn as to exclude all other early writings, even those which are most akin to it, we should insist all the more strictly that the science of Introduction should occupy itself solely with the New Testament as such, and not with subjects which it shares with other books, such as language, vocabulary, geography and the like; if any New Testament writer displays peculiarities in these matters, the fact should be remarked upon, but otherwise they belong to different branches of science. For this reason alone we should refuse to include within the limits of Introduction proper such subjects as the distribution of the New Testament among the nations, its use in the Church, its interpretation from the point of view of theology; for in all these points the fortunes of the New Testament go hand in hand with those of the Old. It is just as unnecessary to lay stress upon such studies in endeavouring to form an historically sound judgment of that piece of the world's literature which is called the New Testament, as it would be absurd to expect, say, that in a chapter on Lessing, a history of German literature should discuss all the translations of his works into foreign languages, the measure of understanding and

third place to the *History of the New Testament Text*, in which the rise of the present wording of the New Testament will be discussed. In the first our scrutiny will be confined to the first two centuries A.D.; in the second we shall be brought down to the Middle Ages—nay, to the very century of the Reformation; the third takes us to the present day.

The inclusion of Part III. as an independent branch of the literature of the New Testament within the limits of 'Introduction' is not to be gainsaid by the assertion, though correct in itself, that a complete and separate representation of the manner in which the Greek and Roman Classics have been handed down to us through manuscripts and translations has never formed a special part of the history of Classical literature. Greek literary history is certainly little adapted to form an analogy to the literary history of the New Testament; but an Introduction to Homer similar to ours would scarcely be able to ignore the history of his text, any more than a monograph dealing with the literary history of the Sibylline Oracles would be able to ignore the intricate history of the Sibylline texts. No *complete* lists of the different manuscripts and translations are indeed required for our purpose, but we shall certainly need whatever material is necessary to convince our readers of the growth and gradual development even of the smallest fractions of the New Testament, its individual words and sentences, and to give them an insight into the forces and laws by which that growth was governed. He who does not know that the New Testament he possesses is in its details but an imperfect form of the real New Testament, and why it can be no more than this, has simply not learnt the history of his New Testament properly. In order to fulfil its object it is just as necessary that a history of the New Testament—a book in which we are confronted with claims of so unique a character—should present a history of its text in its main outlines, as that a history of the Apostolic Symbol, of the Augustana, of the Decrees of the Œcumenical Councils should enlighten us fully as to the changes which took place in the wording even of what was accepted by the Church.

4. But unfortunately the ideal treatment of the New

Testament from the point of view of literary history is not to be attained. Our knowledge of the most important questions is extremely fragmentary, and in the case of the individual writings in particular we have practically no external evidence to look to, and are obliged to rely solely on indications to be obtained from the documents themselves. This state of things necessitates a critical investigation of details in which hypothesis is often piled on hypothesis; no connected representation is attainable, and the hope of reconstructing a complete history of the evolution of New Testament literature vanishes into space. With but one New Testament writer—Paul—does our acquaintance approach to intimacy; his epistles, both in number and length, are sufficient to give us a tolerably clear idea of his personality and his peculiar qualities as a writer; but the other New Testament authors remain wrapped in obscurity, no less than the circles from which they sprang and the conditions under which they wrote. We must be content if we can approximately determine in the case of each New Testament Book when and for whom it was written; whether the author wrote in his own name or in that of another; what his principal object was and how he succeeded in expressing it; whether and to what extent he used other authorities, i.e. earlier written documents, and whether his work has come down to us unchanged, untouched by the hand of a later reviser. Here in truth we have but the materials for a history of the New Testament, not the history itself.

With regard to the Canon our position is somewhat better; in the main we know the motives by which the collection and canonisation of the New Testament Books was guided, we know the preliminary steps and the different stages through which the process passed, though in detail there is much that yet remains undiscovered. Finally, for the history of the Text we have indeed an enormous mass of evidence at our disposal, but as to the decisive period before the fourth century we can only be certain of the bare *fact* that the New Testament Text was subjected to considerable alteration, not of the manner in which it was done or of the definite results which followed. There is scarcely a single branch of science in which the

VICTOR, the great mystic (†1141), entitled 'Praenotationes Elucidatoriae de Scriptura sacra et eius Scriptoribus.'

2. After the beginning of the Reforming movement the interest in all questions relating to the Bible naturally increased, and most markedly so in the circles of the Roman Church itself. The name Introduction (*εἰσαγωγή*) for literary productions of this kind appears again at Lucca and Louvain, but none of these works represent a continuation of the impulse given by Junilius and Cassiodorius. On the other hand, a remarkable advance is shown by the 'Bibliotheca Sancta' of SIXTUS OF SIENA—baptised Jew, Franciscan and finally Dominican—which appeared in 1566. This is a gigantic work divided into eight books, of which but one is devoted to Hermeneutics, three are taken up with a history of Exegesis (highly meritorious, though not always trustworthy), and the rest consists in a positive enumeration of the books declared by orthodox doctrine to be Canonical, and a defence of this Canon against heretical objections. Here we regularly find information as to author, date, contents and order of succession of the different Biblical Books, bearing witness to considerable reading and even to the timid promptings of a critical sense. For some time Sixtus remained unsurpassed in the Catholic world, nor were the kindred productions of Protestants, which appeared under very various titles,¹ of any higher value; criticism has no part in them whatever; all is subordinated to the dogmatic interest. Historical material is only made use of in so far as it can be made to lead up to the orthodox Protestant view of the Scriptures.

3. A new epoch was inaugurated for the science of Introduction—the creator of which he might be called—by RICHARD SIMON, priest of the Oratory of Paris, who died in 1712. True that the great Arminian theologian and politician HUGO GROTIUS (†1645) had already applied an impartial criticism to

¹ E.g., that of A. RIVETUS (died in Holland in 1651): *Isagoge sive introductio generalis ad sacram scripturam Veteris et Novi Testamenti, in qua eius natura, existentia, auctoritas, necessitas, puritas, versionum et interpretum rationes et modi indagantur, eiusque dignitas, perfectio et usus adversus veteres et novos scriptores lucifugas asseritur et de vero controversiarum fidei iudice fusius disputatur.*

certain Books of the Bible, and examined their authenticity with results not always favourable to tradition; true, too, that in his wonderfully suggestive 'Tractatus theologico-politicus' the philosopher SPINOZA (†1677) had demanded an historical understanding and an historical treatment of the Bible, and shattered, in principle, the omnipotence of dogma on that field; but both these writers stopped short at occasional indications. Simon, on the other hand, published a 'History of the New Testament' at Rotterdam in 1689, 1690 and 1692,¹ and thus not only set a new inquiry on foot, but proceeded at the same time to answer it.² The History of Exegesis fills indeed the greater part of his space; relics of the older method, such as discussions on the inspiration of the New Testament Books, apologetic directed against Jews, philosophers and heretics, dissertations on the style of the Evangelists and Apostles and on the Hellenistic tongue are to be found even here; but the dogmatic element is merely nominal, and Simon's interest in the New Testament is that of the historian. Though the history of the text is the chief object of his toil, he manages to deal with all the main questions which we shall discuss in the first two parts of our Introduction within 230 pages of his first volume—although, it is true, with varying degrees of energy: e.g. Chap. x. *Du temps et de l'ordre de chaque évangile*; Chap. xii. *De l'Évangile de S^t Luc; ce qui l'a pu obliger de le publier, y en ayant deux autres qui avoient esté publiés avant le sien*; Chap. xvi. (on the Epistle to the Hebrews): *si elle est de S^t Paul et canonique. Ce que l'antiquité a crû là-dessus tant dans l'Orient que dans l'Occident*. Simon separated the New Testament from the Old; he gave the impulse towards the treatment of the New Testament as a branch of literary history; he drew attention to the incessant development it has undergone, and inaugurated the philological and

¹ Part I.: *Histoire critique du texte du Nouveau Testament*; Part II.: *Histoire critique des versions du N.T.*; Part III.: *Histoire critique des principaux commentateurs du N.T.* Valuable supplements to Parts I. and II. appeared in 1695 in Paris, entitled *Nouvelles observations sur le texte et les versions du N.T.*: the whole together taking up well over 2,000 quarto pages.

² Cf. H. Margival: *R. Simon et la critique biblique au XVII^e siècle* (Paris, 1900).

his 'Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Kanons' (4 Parts, 1771-75). He showed that the New Testament Canon was the work of men and did not come into being till towards the end of the second century, simultaneously with the Catholic Church, and moreover that the judgment of these men as to the Apostolicity of any book ought not to debar their descendants from independent verification. By the distinction he made between the *Word of God* and the *Canonical* he finally freed the study of the New Testament from the fear of destroying religion or faith by its results. Semler did not accomplish any connected attempt at an 'Introduction,' nor was the gift of presentation or of the skilful distribution of his material vouchsafed to him; he cannot be acquitted of a tendency towards eccentric assertion, and yet by his numerous monographs on subjects connected with the New Testament he gave a mighty impulse to research in all departments, and in some actually advanced it—e.g. by his demonstration that the Apocalypse and the Gospel of John could not possibly have come from one and the same hand.

5. In the century that has elapsed since the death of Semler incredible industry has been devoted, especially in Germany, to the study of the New Testament, and in spite of various attempts of the reactionary party to compel a return to the traditional opinions, it has followed the principles and the methods of free historical investigation more and more closely. But from this time onwards the great advances made in our subject have depended less on the works embracing the history of the New Testament as a whole than on the monographs dealing, say, with the Pastoral Epistles, the Johannine writings or the Gospels, and on the numerous commentaries upon each separate Book of the New Testament. F. SCHLEIERMACHER's doubts as to the genuineness of 1. Timothy were soon extended to 2. Timothy and Titus; the right of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apocalypse, the Catholic Epistles, to bear the names of their supposed authors was denied with ever greater insistence and on ever new grounds. At first, indeed, the mere love of criticising outstripped the need for a positive estimation and understanding. The disputes on authenticity left no room

for an appreciative analysis of the documents criticised, and as a natural consequence an insatiable desire arose for setting up new hypotheses on all critical questions. The more startling and ingenious they were, so much the better, and a steady and well-founded advance from sure to less certain ground was seldom to be met with.

This phase of the study of Introduction was typified on its questionable side by the 'Einleitung in das N. T.' of F. GOTTFRIED EICHHORN, the poly-historian of Göttingen¹—a work full of broad deductions and extraordinary interpretations—and on its favourable side by the 'Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in die kanonischen Bücher des N. T.' of W. M. L. DE WETTE, the great Biblical scholar (died at Basle in 1849)—a book which went through five editions, the first appearing in 1826 and the fifth in 1848. Unfortunately the history of the New Testament Canon, together with much indispensable matter besides, must here be sought for in the Introduction to the Old Testament, while the first section—dealing with the original language of the New Testament—is superfluous in the form in which he presents it; the writer's attitude towards critical problems varies very much with the different editions, and—chief defect of all—he thinks more of telling us the opinions of theologians about the New Testament Books than of giving us a plain account of the Books themselves; but his work is rendered useful even to students of to-day by its wealth of carefully collected information on the literature and history of research, by the uniformity of its treatment, the free, sober, earnest tone of its criticism and the lofty and objective attitude of its author, who is, if anything, too sparing of his words. In opposition to the *critical* tendencies prevailing at that time, the cause of *tradition* was upheld by the Catholic J. L. Hug of Freiburg, whose 'Einleitung in die Schriften des N. T.'s' appeared first in 1808, and the fourth edition in 1847. This elegantly written work, which excels in the art of satisfying all the wishes of the Church while maintaining an air of complete open-mindedness, has exercised a great influence, which would

¹ In five vols., 1804-1827.

have been quite comprehensible even if the learning and tact of the writer had not in truth hit the mark often enough as compared with the exploits of the innovators. But its greatest interest to-day is for the ecclesiastical historian, who may study the difference between the Catholicism of the beginning of the century and the Catholicism of the present day to great advantage by comparing Hug with the more recent works of Introduction from the hands of Catholics—e.g. with CORNELY'S 'Historica et critica introductio in Novi Testamenti libros sacrosanctos,' vols. i. and iii. (Paris, 1885 and 1886), or with A. SCHÄFER'S 'Einleitung in das N. T.' (Paderborn, 1898).

C. AUGUST CREDNER (died at Giessen in 1857) rendered excellent service by his numerous and valuable works in all departments of New Testament Introduction; he did not live to carry out the plan of an Introduction which he drew up (although the first part of such a work appeared in 1836), but the task was undertaken in his stead by the Strasburg professor EDWARD REUSS (†1891), whose 'Geschichte der heiligen Schriften des N. T.'s' first appeared in 1842 and reached a sixth edition in 1887. The most important parts of this very attractively written book are those concerned with the history of the translations and of Exegesis (§§ 421-600), which, however, we cannot regard as belonging to our subject; and in spite of the title 'Geschichte der Entstehung der *Neu Testamentlichen* heiligen Schriften,' the first section deals with the Epistles of Clement and of Barnabas, the Clementines, the Catholic Gospels of the Birth and Childhood, Hermas, the Symbolum, etc., in exactly the same way as with James or 1. Peter. In the many decades during which it has survived, this work has not only increased considerably in bulk, but its venerable author has with untiring energy and never-failing independence of judgment continued to supplement and improve it and to discuss the views put forward in more recent works. So much, however, has undergone transformation in our branch of science since 1842 that not even the art of a Reuss could succeed in entirely suppressing all traces of *antiquation* in the latest editions.

6. The most revolutionary change in the treatment of the

history of the New Testament proceeded from the Tübingen School, so called from its head, the Tübingen Professor FERDINAND CHRISTIAN BAUR († 1860). Its most distinguished members (among whom David Friedrich Strauss cannot strictly be reckoned) are E. ZELLER, ALBRECHT SCHWEGLER, K. R. KÖSTLIN, ADOLF HILGENFELD (of Jena) and GUSTAV VOLKMAR (of Zürich, † 1891), and among the younger generation, with whom the original point of view continually undergoes new and important modifications, CARL HOLSTEN of Heidelberg († 1896), and OTTO PFLEIDERER of Berlin. The organ of this school, pre-eminently devoted to studies connected with the history of primitive Christianity and of the New Testament, was the series of 'Theologische Jahrbücher' which appeared from 1842 to 1857. Since 1867 a periodical of similar tendencies and contents has been published at Leyden, entitled the 'Theologisch Tijdschrift,' the contributors to which are Dutch theologians, disciples for the most part of J. H. SCHOLTEN († 1885), who allowed themselves to be converted with their master to the historical views of the Tübingen School about the beginning of the sixties. Before this, however, Baur had already found friends in France: EDMOND SCHERER, for instance, there upheld the principal doctrines of the Tübingen School from the year 1850 onwards, and TIMOTHÉE COLANI, editor from 1850 to 1869 of the 'Revue de Théologie,' was conspicuous among those who shared his views. In England a few isolated stragglers who have appeared since 1870 have gained no influence.

It is usual to designate the Tübingen writers briefly as 'tendency-critics,' because in the case of every book of the New Testament they inquire first of all into the 'tendency' it was meant to serve. But the epoch-making qualities of their criticism are thereby but poorly rendered. The reproach that they tore asunder the single unity formed by the New Testament documents and scattered it over two centuries is, however, still less appropriate; what was great in Baur's work was rather his demand that these documents should not be regarded each in a separate light as the accidental products of any one religious personality, but should be grasped in close connection with the

history of Christianity, as the necessary outcome of a particular phase in its development. The key to the knowledge of this history Baur thought he had discovered in the antagonism between Paul and the Primitive Apostles, between the representative of a law-freed, universalist Christianity and the champions of a Messianic creed in bondage to all the prejudices of Judaism. This struggle, he considers, gradually became less and less acute from the second Christian generation onwards; concessions were made by both sides, and a middle course was finally agreed upon in order to save the very existence of the Church in the face of the hatred of Jews and Gentiles, and the disintegrating tendencies of Gnosticism. A theology at once super-Pauline and super-Judaistic became the foundation for the *one* Catholic Church, which at once proceeded to seal the compact by the creation of the New Testament Canon, thereby recognising all the Apostles without exception as the highest authority, as though no difference of opinion had ever existed among them. As this view of the early history of the Church is essentially drawn from New Testament writings—Galatians, 1. and 2. Corinthians, the Apocalypse (!)—so its logical consequence must be the arrangement of those writings along such a line of development; if they are really historical authorities they must stand in intimate relation to the dispute which formed the very life of the history of the time. They must have their definite place upon the line that runs from the Judaists of Jerusalem of about the year 40 to the champions of the Catholic Church of about 200, such as IRENAEUS of Lyons or TERTULLIAN of Carthage; all of them, without exception, must be written in the interests either of strife or of reconciliation. This then, in Baur's view, explains why we possess documents under the names of Paul, Peter or John, the 'spuriousness' of which is beyond question; in this manner the later writers appealed in entire good faith to the great authorities of their party for the defence of that which seemed to them indispensable. The divergency between their own point of view and that of these old authorities they did not perceive, and we can now reconstruct the course of development within the Pauline party by the writings of the so-called Paul and his

disciple 'Luke,' as we can the gradual emancipation of the Primitive Apostolic tendency from its one-sidedness and the extinction of the antagonism between it and Paul in the Catholic Epistles, Matthew, Mark and the Johannine writings.

Thus the only witnesses left from the earliest period of Christianity before 70 A.D., would be four Pauline Epistles—Galatians, 1. and 2. Corinthians and Romans—and the Apocalypse of the Apostle John, a document of the bitterest hatred against Paul, inspired by Ebionism of the narrowest type; while the earliest record of the higher synthesis would be the Fourth Gospel (quite close to which come the Johannine Epistles), written some time after 160. 2. Peter belongs more or less to the same period, and was written with the object of pronouncing a sort of canonisation of the Epistles of his arch-enemy Paul through the mouth of Peter. Not long before, the Pastoral Epistles had exhorted the flock to put all their strength into the overthrow of Gnosticism, having already lost all sense of what had hitherto made union so difficult—the alternative implied in the question of Faith and Works. The rest of the New Testament Books spring from the time of the attempts at mediation, a statement which applies particularly to the Synoptics and the Acts. In their present form the Synoptics can only be understood as arising from the interests at work during the period of assimilation in the second century; Matthew is the conciliatory recast of a Judaistic original, just as Luke rests upon a strictly Pauline 'Primitive Luke,' while Mark, a compilation of excerpts from Matthew and Luke with the omission of all that might foster a recollection of the original feud, is the Gospel of neutrality; its 'tendency' is the absence of tendency. The Acts, however, are pervaded even down to the most trifling details by the fundamental idea of setting up a parallel between Peter and Paul, of representing the leaders of the two contending parties as similar in word and deed, intentions and effects, and thus of winning support through history itself for the new watchword 'Peter and Paul.'

A large number of the theses laid down by the Tübingen School have been proved to be untenable. Even within the

school itself the fact was recognised, and first asserted definitely by HILGENFELD, that among the Epistles bearing the name of Paul, 1. Thessalonians, Philippians and Philemon could not be ascribed on grounds of internal evidence alone to any other than the writer of Galatians and Corinthians, and that a conciliatory tendency had only been forced upon them. Nor could it be permanently denied that even external evidence forbade us to assign any large number of New Testament writings to a date so far into the second century. But the most important point is that, thanks to the labours of HOLSTEN, the majority of the Tübingen critics now admit that it is impracticable to regard Peter and the Primitive Apostles as the champions of extreme Judaism at all, but that Peter rather maintained towards the Judaistic agitators an attitude of greater freedom and mildness in comparison with the uncompromising hostility of Paul, that in fact his point of view was not very clearly defined. In short, they recognise that here, too, the antagonism is in a certain sense the later growth, and a relatively tolerant unity the primitive condition. But the historical system of Baur suffers above all from the mistake, first, of over-rating the importance of Judaism in the early days of Christianity and of ascribing to Paul alone the championship of universalistic tendencies and the edification of Gentile Christian communities, and, secondly, of insisting with rigid one-sidedness that the history of primitive Christianity was dominated till far into the second century by the sole interest of the battle round the Law and the prerogatives of the Jews; whereas in reality this battle was only one factor among many in the formation of its history, and innumerable Christians of the first two generations not only did not understand it, but did not even know anything about it. It is not mainly from ideas and principles that a new religion draws its life: the decisive influences are emotions, feelings, hopes; and Baur's picture of the historical development of the Apostolic and post-Apostolic ages is too logical and correct, too deficient in warmth of colour to have probability on its side. Nevertheless the fact remains that Baur inaugurated a new epoch in the study of the New

Testament, not only by his numerous flashes of new and unerring insight on questions of Introduction as well as of exegesis and New Testament theology, but principally by the fact that he raised the pursuit of this branch of science to a higher level, and did away with the subjective and detached method of investigation. Since Baur's day the literary history of the New Testament can no longer be dealt with apart from its connection with the history of Christianity as a whole; he has taught us to regard the Books of the New Testament from a truly historical point of view, as the products of and the witnesses to the Christian spirit of a definite age.

Of Baur's writings the most important for our subject are: 'Die Christuspartei in Korinth' (an essay in the 'Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie' for 1831, pp. 61 fol.), 'Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi, sein Leben und Wirken, seine Briefe und Lehre' (1845 and 1866), 'Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien' (1847) and the comprehensive summary of his system in the 'Kirchengeschichte der drei ersten Jahrhunderte' (1853). His immediate disciples did no more, for the most part, than carry out the ideas of their master in individual portions of the literature of the New Testament, but an exception to this rule was formed by SCHWEGLER, who in his 'Nachapostolisches Zeitalter in den Hauptmomenten seiner Entwicklung' treated his subject in such a way that it included a discussion of almost all the writings of the New Testament. HILGENFELD produced a 'Historisch-kritische Einleitung in das N.T.' in 1875, in which he gave the history of the individual documents between that of the Canon and that of the Text. Not only in questions of the authenticity of Pauline Epistles or the dating of spurious writings were his decisions more conservative than Baur's; even in the case of the Gospels he gave up the attempt to explain the divergencies between them solely on the ground of their different interests, and accordingly placed Mark at any rate between Matthew and Luke. The post-Apostolic age, in so far as it continued to produce New Testament writings at all, he considered to have been influenced rather by the persecution of the Christians undertaken by the Roman State, and by the internal

crisis produced by Gnosticism, than by the antagonism between the parties of the Primitive Apostles and of Paul which dominated the Apostolic age itself. Both before and after the appearance of this 'Einleitung' he repeatedly advanced and defended the same views as those put forward there in numerous essays and monographs, large and small. But unfortunately there is a certain self-willed obstinacy in this clearly and smoothly written book, which will never allow the writer to go back upon what he has once asserted, and which makes its appearance even outwardly, in the different treatment he bestows on his materials according as he spends a greater or less degree of interest and industry upon them. Still further removed than Hilgenfeld from the prejudices of Baur is OTTO PFLEIDERER, whose tastefully written work on 'Das Urchristentum, seine Schriften und Lehren' (1887, 891 pp.; new edit. 1902) deals, as we might expect from the title, with all the problems of Special Introduction to the New Testament. Here the breach between Paulinism and the Christianity of the Primitive Apostles, the community of Jerusalem, is represented as far slighter from the outset, and the reconciliation as having been effected by Paul himself; a decisive factor in the development of Christianity is recognised in Hellenism, which, however, did not, in the writer's opinion, suddenly force its way into the Church in the middle of the second century, and then produce a complete falling-away from the old ideas, but was already at work in the mind of Paul; while in those of the later generations it was continually forming new and peculiar combinations with the primitive Christian spirit.

7. The merit of having induced the Tübingen School to change its tone does not belong to the party of bitter opposition which rose up against it from the most diverse quarters. The fanatical outcry against the heresy of Baur, as raised, for instance, by H. THIERSCH in Marburg, T. PETER LANGE in Bonn, and H. EBRARD, with his heavy facetiousness, in Erlangen, affected only those circles which had no need of such influence, and the 'Isagogik' of PROF. GUERICKE of Halle—strictly correct in an ecclesiastical sense—has long since fallen into oblivion. Some profit might, however, be found

even at the present day in G. V. LECHLER's 'Apostolisches und Nachapostolisches Zeitalter' (3rd edit. 1885), which gives a sort of history of each individual document of the New Testament by means of a running discussion of the Tübingen propositions, but does not venture to support the tradition under all circumstances, as, for instance, in the case of 2. Peter. But highest in point of intelligence among those whose dogmatic standpoint forced them into an uncompromising opposition to all negative criticism was Prof. J. C. K. VON HOFMANN of Erlangen († 1877), who was never able to complete the detailed exposition of the New Testament which he had in his mind; his lectures, however, on so-called Introduction to the New Testament were edited by VOLCK in 1881 as the ninth part of that work. But they contain not a word on textual history, and the account of the rise of the New Testament Canon is worse than inadequate (it fills just eight pages), while the examination of the individual documents is also unequal and sometimes incomplete. Hofmann ends by justifying the tradition of the Church in the case of all the books of the New Testament: even 2. Peter, he considers, is from the hand of the Apostle; even Hebrews as well as the three Pastoral Epistles was written by Paul after his first imprisonment; but as in his exegesis and analytical reproduction of the documents in question, so in his criticism of them, Hofmann shows himself to be a past master in the art of preferring the far-fetched and the improbable to the natural and the obvious.

Nevertheless theologians were never wanting who protested against the Tübingen ideas while sharing Baur's attitude of freedom towards tradition and dogma. This may be said without qualification at least of E. REUSS, of the celebrated Church historian K. HASE of Jena, of that gifted and imaginative Frenchman ERNEST RENAN, author of the 'Histoire des origines du Christianisme,'¹ and of the Heidelberg professor DANIEL SCHENKEL; while in the main it is also true of H. EWALD, from whose furious attacks on Baur no one would guess how frequent is the agreement even in detail between the two scholars. Among the supporters of the

¹ Seven vols., 1863-1883.

theology of compromise represented by SCHLEIERMACHER, F. BLEEK of Bonn († 1859) rendered conspicuous services in the study of the New Testament. His 'Einleitung in das N. T.' appeared posthumously, edited by J. F. BLEEK (1862), and the third and fourth editions were carefully and piously revised by W. MANGOLD in 1875 and 1886 in accordance with the progress of knowledge up to that time. In the preliminary remarks to this work, which is still widely read at the present day, relics of the old Introductions may yet be found, in the shape of paragraphs on the original language of the New Testament Books and the character of the Greek in which they are written; the order, too, in the first main division, dealing with the origin of the individual books, is remarkable; the four Gospels and Acts are there placed first and the Pauline Epistles second, but here the arrangement suddenly ceases to follow the traditional order of the Canon, and is determined by the chronological order of their composition. Otherwise this somewhat prolix work (it covers 1035 pages) has many merits; the writer combines a warm love of his subject and great discretion in judgment with wide knowledge and many-sided interests, while in controversy he always maintains a standard of high-bred decorum. Many shortcomings which were due to his excessively conservative bent have been made good by the more drastic proceedings of Mangold, though here the reader is too often perplexed by the discrepancy between Bleek's text and Mangold's notes, which contradict one another flatly, for instance, in such questions as that of the second imprisonment of Paul. Much has also been suffered to remain in the text which the editor afterwards proves to be either inaccurate or erroneous.

In its general attitude Bleek's 'Einleitung' is far too similar to that of DE WETTE to have had the power to break the influence of the Tübingen School; Baur's historical system was not to be combated by pointing out a few difficulties and improbabilities contained in it; it was necessary to replace it by a wholly different conception of the period of history it covers, in which its mistakes should be avoided while its established results should not be ignored. It was ALBRECHT RITSCHL of Göttingen († 1889) who, as early as 1846,

in his 'Das Evangelium Marcions und das kanonische Evangelium des Lucas,' and afterwards in his 'Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche' (esp. the 2nd edit., 1857), showed, while keeping strictly to the methods of Baur, that the Tübingen over-estimate of the importance of Jewish Christianity was unwarranted, and that Hellenic thought was a powerful auxiliary factor in the formation of the primitive Catholic Church. Beyond this Ritschl himself took no part in the special study of the New Testament, and his own views on the development of Primitive Christianity might with advantage have been corrected and supplemented in many ways; he under-estimates the influence of the Jewish element, for instance, in the Early Church, and systematises where it is rather a question of individualities; but almost all students of the present day who possess any independence of judgment are agreed that it is the great merit of Ritschl to have shown, in the most convincing manner, what was the chief defect in the historical system of the Tübingen School.

8. At the present day we have little to fear from the one-sidedness of that school, but all the more from the arrogance of the party of tradition, which behaves—and endeavours so to persuade the public—as though the labours of Baur had left our knowledge in exactly the same state as it was in before. A glance at the works of Introduction most widely read in Germany to-day will confirm this statement. They are H. J. HOLTZMANN'S 'Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das N. T.' (1885, 1886 and 1892); B. WEISS'S 'Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das N. T.' (1886, 1889 and 1897); F. GODET'S 'Einleitung in das N. T.' (1893 sqq., translated from the French)¹ and T. ZAHN'S 'Einleitung in das N. T.' in two volumes published respectively in 1897 and 1899.² These works are carried out on very different scales; Godet and Zahn present only Special Introduction, for which Zahn covers 1150 pages in all, Godet 378 for the Pauline Epistles alone; whereas Weiss and Holtzmann with 500 pages apiece give us not only

¹ As yet only vols. i. and ii. have appeared, in incomplete form, vol. i. on the Pauline Epistles, and vol. ii. on the Gospels and Acts.

² A second edition of both volumes appeared in 1900.

this but also the history of the Canon and the New Testament Text (Weiss at any rate a sketch of this last); while Holtzmann adds an appendix conspicuous for its precision and exhaustiveness on the New Testament Apocrypha. Holtzmann's special merit is that he gives full and always accurate information as to the arguments employed by both sides on each controverted question; indeed his objectivity sometimes goes too far, in that his own well-reasoned judgment does not always appear clearly enough above the mass of opinions and ideas he quotes from other writers. The object of Weiss, on the other hand, is rather to state each problem plainly and lucidly and then to solve it, and he seldom allows the reader to perceive how many objections may be and have been raised against his attempts at solution. Godet, with his edifying tone, never lays firm hold of any single problem; what he gives us is a sermon on the New Testament Books richly adorned with quotations and occasionally ingenious and striking, but the very opposite of a guide to methodical investigation. Zahn excels in coolness and confidence, and presents us with an enormous wealth of individual disquisitions of great learning, as well as with many original combinations of ideas.

But only one of these four, Holtzman, follows the good traditions of German criticism—and moreover without any school preconceptions—in pointing out the very different degrees of certainty with which we can proceed to formulate decisions within its domain. The three others regard the ‘authenticity’ of every New Testament Book—with the exception of Hebrews, which, however, does not even profess to be by Paul—as above all question, although indeed with this shade of difference between them, that Weiss looks upon the negative critics merely as purblind, Godet as impious, and Zahn as stupid and malignant. Thus the ecclesiastical tradition is saved, and even ADOLF HARNACK in his preface to the ‘*Chronologie der althristlichen Literatur*’¹ sees a time approaching ‘in which we shall no longer trouble ourselves much about the deciphering of problems of literary history in connection with Primitive Christianity, because the thing which it is our main object to prove, viz. the essential

¹ 1897, vol. i. p. x.

trustworthiness of the tradition, with few important exceptions, will have attained universal recognition.' In the whole of the New Testament, according to Harnack,¹ there is probably but a single document which can be called pseudonymous in the strictest sense of the word—the Second Epistle of Peter.

To me, however, this new cult for the 'tradition'—by which, as a matter of fact, Harnack understands something quite different from the 'tradition' of Zahn and his followers—seems quite as questionable as the earlier prejudice against it; we shall indeed have to take it as our starting-point again and again, but we must always be prepared to leave it. What violent means must be used in order to assert the truth of the tradition from beginning to end, may be gathered, as we know, from Zahn's book. Harnack, indeed, exclaims at the end of the above-quoted Preface, 'It is in history, not in literary criticism, that the problems of the future lie,' thus as it were condemning Zahn's dogmatism in advance. But is it possible to write history at all without including literary criticism?

A work like Carl Weizsäcker's '*Apostolisches Zeitalter der christlichen Kirche*'² has proved with masterly skill how intimately connected is the history of the earliest Christianity with that of the literature of the New Testament. There we find the history of New Testament literature interwoven with that of the primitive Christian religion during the first century of its existence, and nearly all the New Testament Books analysed, examined and given their true value at their proper place; nor can any unprejudiced reader fail to recognise the convincing force that belongs to this presentation of history, in spite of the fact that the writer avoids all polemical discussion. But is Weizsäcker's book, which gives the most perfect expression to one of the fundamental ideas of Baur, calculated to confirm 'the essential trustworthiness of the tradition'? Perhaps Zahn's '*Einleitung*' has convinced Harnack since then, that the time of 'universal

¹ P. viii.

² 1886 and 1892; translated into English for the *Theological Translation Library* (Williams and Norgate), by James Millar, B.D. 1894.

recognition' in the matter of problems of literary history connected with Primitive Christianity is still far distant, and that we may not relinquish the tasks set by the study of Introduction as though they were already accomplished, but must labour more strenuously than before for their discharge in the right spirit, in a loftier tone than of old, and without the former pretence of universal knowledge, the traffic in hypotheses, and the mania for accumulating details—shortcomings, all of them, of which the 'Traditionalists' may be accused no less than the 'Critics.'

No very great advance in the study of Introduction can be expected in the immediate future. Lost literature of the first century will scarcely be restored to us by discoveries in the monasteries of Syria or the sand of Egypt; we must be content with what we already possess. And here literary criticism will do well to return to a closer union with separate exegesis and so-called New Testament theology. The chief blame for the mistakes of the Lower and the Higher Criticism is due to faultiness of exegesis, which is still very general in spite of the abundance of good commentaries. The science of New Testament Introduction cannot aspire to be more than a coadjutor in the history of the origin of the Christian religion; by that aim she should limit her range and estimate the value of her results.

9. Brief mention must finally be made of a form of pseudo-criticism—for it has itself deprecated the name of hyper-criticism—which considers itself called upon simply to upset all previous views of the development of the earliest Christian literature. It had a precursor about 1840 in BRUNO BAUER, a theologian of Berlin, whose doctrine was that the great figures of the New Testament, Jesus and Paul, must be regarded as literary fictions and Christianity as the product of Roman popular philosophy. In the last twenty-five years similar theories have been put forward in Holland by A. PIERSON, A. D. LOMAN, VAN MANEN and NABER, but in Germany very few serious investigators have as yet taken up the idea; among them, however, are R. STECK of Berne with his '*Der Galaterbrief nach seiner Echtheit untersucht, nebst kritischen Bemerkungen zu den paulinischen Hauptbriefen*' (1888), and,

in principle, the Swabian professor D. VÖLTER, now in Amsterdam. These modern sceptics differ from one another in innumerable points, but they are all agreed in asserting that the chief Pauline Epistles are precisely those which cannot possibly spring from the historical Paul, but belong to the time immediately before Marcion, in whom the development from below upwards, the antinomian tendency, reached its highest point. Here the Acts must actually serve to throw suspicion on the Epistle to the Galatians!

We shall decline to make the smallest compromise with such a system, first, because Epistles like those to the Galatians and the Corinthians appear to us to be beyond the range of forgery, if only on account of the many 'illogical,' incongruous things that they contain, highly natural as these would have been in the situations implied; secondly, because we can find no room in the second century for the artist who, immediately before the authority-loving Marcion, proceeded with a sovereign disdain for all authority to create the authorities for the next stage of development; and, thirdly, because we reject, as an idea that has never been found consistent with history, the fundamental assumption that the Christianity of the year 50 was connected by an exact and rigid line of evolution with the Christianity of a hundred years later. The miserable ambition of explaining historical personages as the mere products of their age, of calculating them out as though they were a mechanical combination of the factors that determined the intellectual life of their time and their surroundings, is not likely to be fulfilled in face of the great men of the world's history. The author of the 'principal' Pauline Epistles will always remain to a certain extent a mystery to us, whether we look for him in the second or the first century. In short, this latest school seems to me to be no more than a symptom of disease, which, however, is the less to be feared because to all appearances the tendency to find a solution for every difficulty that may confront exegete or critic, in the light-hearted rejection of documents as spurious, or to fill up the gaps in our knowledge with *piquant* conjectures and ingenious ideas, is growing weaker and weaker throughout the whole field of historical

research. It is to be hoped that this may soon be said of a thing but little less offensive: the passion, if not for declaring the great Epistles themselves to be non-Pauline, at least for robbing them of all value by the assertion that they are full of interpolations, and by the endless production of irresponsible conjectures. Unfortunately, the example in this department was set by C. H. WEISSE, otherwise a scholar of great repute, and was followed in Holland by J. W. STRAATMANN and M. A. N. ROVERS, and in Germany by E. SULZE and D. VÖLTER. Indeed, the production of schemes for the dismemberment of New Testament Books will soon reach its utmost limit; ¹ the partition of the Epistles to the Corinthians by H. HAGGE and H. LISCO may be called typical of its methods. If these gentlemen are right, the Almighty must have set from 90 to 120 hands in motion during the first and second centuries, to produce a mutilation, unparalleled elsewhere, of all the New Testament texts, with the sole object of creating a field for the brilliant display of the ingenuity of modern theologians, for whom no other task is now worthy of notice.

¹ A complete account of them down to 1894 may be found in CLEMEN'S *Die Einheitlichkeit der paulinischen Briefe an der Hand der bisher mit Bezug auf sie aufgestellten Interpolations- und Compilationshypothesen geprüft* (1894).

PART I

A HISTORY OF EACH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS

[Of besides the works mentioned in § 2, the Commentaries on the New Testament as a whole, which usually pay particular attention to questions of Introduction. Special mention must be made, however, of those edited by H. A. W. Meyer and by H. Holtzmann. The 'Kritisch-exegetisches Commentar über das Neue Testament' of the former appeared in 1882 in 16 vols., in which 1. and 2. Thess. and Hebrews were undertaken by G. K. G. Lünemann, 1. and 2. Tim., Titus and the Catholic Epistles by J. E. Huther, Revelation by F. Düsterdieck and the rest by the Editor. The more recent editions have been entrusted to others; B. Weiss has undertaken the greater part of the work, but several sections have already been re-edited twice over. We shall mention the newest editions at the head of each of our §§, under the title of H. A. W. Meyer. But as the original unity of design, tone and scale has disappeared, so the value of the different vols. is by this time very unequal; all, however, have a tendency, while professing to examine the evidence impartially, to concede as little as possible to 'negative' criticism and to make the New Testament writers appear as the representatives of the author's own moderate Protestant orthodoxy. A typical example of this is afforded by Sieffer's commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. The abundant criticism at first applied to older commentators—undertaken on no very clear principles and from differing points of view—has been to an increasing extent abandoned in the newer editions. The 'Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament' of H. J. Holtzmann,¹ with contributions by R. A. Lipsius, P. W. Schmiedel and H. von Soden, is a work which confines itself almost entirely to a practical interpretation of the New Testament texts and to a brief

¹ First appeared in 1889 in Freiburg-i.-Br., but parts of it have now reached a third edition.

answering of questions of literary and religious history by the help of the most trustworthy authorities. The five volumes of Zöckler and Strack's 'Commentar zu den heiligen Schriften der Alten und Neuen Testamente' which deal with the New Testament, reached a second edition in 1897; here, too, the editors were assisted by other writers—Nösgen, Luthardt, Schnedermann, Wohlenberg, Burger and E. Riggenbach, the value of whose work varies considerably. But even if we ignore Nösgen's plaintive contribution, it is impossible to recommend this Commentary as a whole, because the writers' conservative interest too often stands in the way of a clear understanding of the texts. An English parallel to Meyer is afforded by the 'International Critical Commentary,' in which the uniformity of tone and value has as yet been well maintained in spite of the large number of contributors; but unfortunately the greater part of the work has not yet appeared. C. Weizsäcker's 'Das Neue Testament übersetzt' (of which the 9th edition appeared in 1899, Freiburg-i.-Br.) is such a masterpiece of translation that it almost supplies the place of a commentary to the attentive reader.]

BOOK I

THE EPISTLES

CHAPTER I

THE GENUINE EPISTLES OF PAUL

[Cf. B. Weiss: 'Die paulinischen Briefe im berichtigten Text, mit kurzer Erläuterung' (1896, pp. 682).]

§ 3. *The Apostle Paul*

[Consult besides F. C. Baur and E. Renan (see above, pp. 17–23) A. Hausrath: 'Der Apostel Paulus' (1872) and M. Krenkel: 'Paulus, der Apostel der Heiden' (1869) and 'Beiträge zur Aufhellung der Geschichte und der Briefe des Apostels Paulus' (1890). Also F. Spitta: 'Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Urchristentums' (1893), vol. i. pp. 1–108 on 'Die zweimalige römische Gefangenschaft des Paulus,' and pp. 109–154 on the 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians; C. Clemen: 'Die Chronologie der

Paulinischen Briefe' (1893); and 'Ihre Einheitlichkeit, etc.' (1894; see esp. p. 20); W. M. Ramsay: 'St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen' (1895) and 'St. Paul in the Acts' (1898), which latter is rather a persistent defence of the Acts than a biography of Paul; O. Cone: 'Paul the Man, the Missionary and the Teacher' (1898), and Adolf Harnack: 'Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur' (1897). Of this last, vol. i., pp. 233 fol. deal with the 'Chronologie des Paulus und das Todesjahr des Petrus und des Paulus,' and assign the Conversion of Paul to the year 30, his arrest at Jerusalem to Easter, 54, and his arrival in Rome to the spring of 57, after which the writer assumes that he was released, that he departed on fresh journeys, was imprisoned for the second time in Rome and finally executed in 64. On the other hand, Zahn in the 2nd Appendix to vol. ii. of his 'Einleitung,' though he also favours the second imprisonment, assigns the execution to 66 or even 67, the conversion to the beginning of 35 and the arrest in Jerusalem to 58. More to the point is E. Schürer's article in the 'Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie,' 1898, entitled 'Zur Chronologie des Lebens Pauli.' Besides these works, all chiefly concerned with questions of biography and literary history, there are those bearing on the religious aspect of the question, such as A. Sabatier's 'L'Apôtre Paul,' 1882, and O. Pfeiderer's 'Der Paulinismus' (1890) of which even the 1st edition (1873) is not at all out of date.]

1. The man to whose extant writings we shall first turn our attention was a Jew of the purest Jewish blood (Gal. ii. 15, i. 13 fol.; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Rom. xi. 1; Philip. iii. 4 fol.) and belonged, according to his own account, to the tribe of Benjamin. Jerome tells us that he was born in the little Galilean town of Gischala, and if this is correct—which is, however, doubtful—Paul and his family must have migrated very early to Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia. In the Acts he is simply mentioned as 'a man of Tarsus'; but according to xxii. 3, he was also born there, and certainly such a title could hardly have been applied to him if he had merely made a passing sojourn in Tarsus during one of his missionary journeys. The year of his birth is unknown, but it cannot have been very far from the beginning of our era, for before his conversion he makes his appearance in public in a way which would have been hardly possible for a Jew of less than

thirty years of age; his mind had had time to take firm root in the Rabbinical theology before he cast aside what had once seemed so precious to him; while after 60 A.D. he speaks of himself from his prison as 'Paul the aged.'¹ The fact that he reckoned himself among the 'chief apostles,' also, would be best explained by supposing that there was no substantial difference of age between Jesus and himself, and that he was at most two or three years the younger. At his circumcision he was given the Jewish name of Saul, by which alone he is spoken of in the Acts as far as xiii. 9.; there, however, we learn that he also bore the name of Paul, which he uses exclusively in his epistles. There is nothing in the Acts to indicate that he adopted this second name at that particular moment—possibly in order to symbolise his new birth—and it is still less probable that his meeting with Sergius Paulus the Proconsul of Cyprus was the occasion of the change. Double names were becoming the fashion in the East at that time, and it was especially common to couple a Greek with a Semitic name, so that our Apostle might very well have been called both Saul and Paul from his youth up. He would then have left it to the changing *milieux* in which he happened to find himself to call him by whichever name they found most convenient; so that to Greeks he would always have been Paul.²

Paul did not spring by any means from the lowest class. His whole bearing would be sufficient to show this; but we also have evidence that his family possessed the Roman *civitas* long before his birth. That he should have learnt a trade—that of tent-maker or tanner according to Acts xviii. 3—is no objection to this theory, since such was the very general custom among the Jewish scribes. On his missionary journeys it is clear that he had no private means at his disposal, but the apostate would have scorned to accept any support from his yet unconverted family. No doubt he intended to become a Rabbi and with this view betook himself when still quite a young man to Jerusalem, where teachers as distinguished as Gamaliel the Elder were at that time to be found.³ Here he remained true to that extreme Pharisaism

¹ Philemon, ver. 9.

² Cf. Deissmann's *Bibelstudien* (1895), vol. i. pp. 181 fol. ³ Acts xxii. 3.

which was the tradition of his family; he could not be strict enough in his observance of the Law, and he looked with burning hatred, ready for any and every act of violence, upon the small body of the followers of Jesus who had so rudely attacked the Pharisaic ideal of the Messiah, and therefore, in spite of their attachment to the Law, could never hope to be tolerated or even recognised by the Pharisee pure and simple. Jesus himself he had not seen (2. Cor. v. 16 proves nothing whatever either way), so that he probably did not arrive in Jerusalem until after his death, but the persecution and extermination of his followers seemed to Paul a worthy task to which to devote his life.¹ On some such errand he had set out one day for Damascus,² when the reaction suddenly and irresistibly came upon him. He describes the occurrence himself as a direct revelation of Christ vouchsafed to him in or near Damascus, and charging him with the task of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles.³ Of course this vision had its psychological preparation within him; instead of the proud self-satisfaction of the average Jew, which, in the words of Philipp. vii. 6, could bear witness to itself 'as touching the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless,' Paul had already known moments when he had felt all the bitter pain of one sold unto sin and condemned to a helpless doing of evil in spite of all his love for good, and had cried in his woe 'Who is it that will save me?' The little he had heard of the sayings of Jesus had long since made an impression upon him, and the courage and contempt for death that he had witnessed among the Christian community had already begun to exercise his conscience. It was now only the obstinacy of the Pharisee, determined to seek salvation 'in the Law,' through his own merits, that still combated the *σκάνδαλον* of the Gospel preached by these innovators, and this precisely because such a man would naturally be more alive than they to the logical conclusions of their faith. In a Paul of Tarsus the struggle between his own religious experience and the Jewish tradition could have but one ending—it led him inevitably to the vision of that Jesus whom he had

¹ Gal. i. 13.² Acts ix. 1-19.³ Gal. i. 15-17; 1. Cor. xv. 8.

striven so hard to believe a false prophet and a traitor, throned in heavenly glory, to the instant acceptance of the Lord's call and the entrance by baptism into the ranks of his disciples.

The narrative of these events in the Acts¹ is of a somewhat legendary character, as, indeed, is the case with nearly all those parts of the book that bear on the first and larger half of Paul's missionary life; it is only when we come to the later part that we find it drawing from trustworthy sources. Here we may rely almost without exception on the information it gives as to the order of succession of the chief stations of his missionary travels, but its indications of time are less valuable and are often put in the form of conjecture by the writer himself. Fortunately, however, we may learn enough from the actual letters of the Apostle to give us a tolerably clear idea of his fortunes after his conversion. *Immediately* after his vision (Gal. i. 16 fol.) he went into Arabia, returning some time later to Damascus and thence after three years' absence to Jerusalem. He only left Damascus under compulsion, for according to 2. Cor. xi. 32 an attempt was made on his life by the Ethnarch of the Arabian King Aretas—probably prompted, like all such later persecutions, by the inconvenient zeal he displayed in his enthusiasm for the new religion. A singular hypothesis has been put forward, based on the 'immediately' of Gal. i. 16 and on the similarity with which Paul describes his sojourn in Arabia and that which took place afterwards in Syria, that he spent these three years in solitude in the Arabian desert, silently meditating upon his experience or developing undisturbed his peculiar system of doctrine—as though 'Arabia' were mere desert, and Paul's vocation that of the scientific theologian! No, a definite office had been laid upon him in his vision, and Paul was not the man to hesitate an instant in the discharge of all the duties of that office, while it need not surprise us that he did not at once achieve brilliant successes that left their mark on universal history.

When he found the country east of the Jordan closed to him it was necessary to seek some other field of enterprise,

¹ ix. 1-30.

and what more natural than that he should turn to his own country of Syria and Cilicia? He merely touched at Jerusalem on his way thither, and himself declares that his fortnight's stay in the city was of a purely private and secret nature; he wisely contented himself while there with visiting Peter and being introduced by him to James the brother of the Lord. In any case the words of Gal. i. 18 and 22 effectually exclude the possibility of his having had any disputes at this time with the 'Hellenists' of the Jewish capital.¹ He remained in the new scene of his activity for fourteen years² and doubtless used Antioch as his base of operations, as the Primitive Apostles used Jerusalem; for although he may not have been the actual founder of the Christian community there—which early became one of importance—he regarded himself at least as the representative of the whole Gentile-Christianity of the city.³ The report in the Acts⁴ rests no doubt on good authority when it tells us that Paul spent a considerable time at Antioch and was at first continually going back to it. It is clear, on the other hand, that he did not confine himself to preaching in this one city for fourteen years continuously, but that he laboured for the Gospel in many parts of Syria and Cilicia, sometimes alone and sometimes with companions, while it is conceivable that even the so-called first missionary journey to Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia and Lycaonia⁵ may have fallen within this period. It is true that in the Acts this journey is made to follow on a second visit of the converted Paul to Jerusalem,⁶ while within this period of fourteen years Paul certainly did not set foot within the borders of Judæa; but this would not be the only error of the Acts relating to that period, and, on the other hand, although Paul himself only mentions his labours in Syria and Cilicia, he may not necessarily have meant to exclude an occasional excursion into neighbouring unconverted countries. Only this journey of Paul and Barnabas cannot have been very important or successful; otherwise Paul would certainly have mentioned it in Gal. i. 21.

¹ Acts ix. 28 fol.

² Gal. ii. 11 fol.

³ Acts xiii. 4–xiv. 26.

² Gal. ii. 1.

⁴ xiv. 28; xv. 35 and xviii. 22.

⁵ xi. 30, xii. 25.

Seventeen years after he had left Jerusalem as the deadly foe of the Christian community there, he returned to make his appearance publicly in its midst, and with him went the Jewish Christian Barnabas and the Gentile Titus whom he had himself converted to the Gospel. This was a step which he would not even yet have dared to take on his own responsibility, but its necessity had been revealed to him in a vision, and the state of affairs outside his own Church now demanded a settlement which Paul could only hope to effect in a satisfactory manner by personal intercourse with the universally acknowledged heads of the new sect. According to Gal. ii. 2-5 Paul was in danger of seeing his labour wasted; there were certain members of the community, whom Paul can only describe as 'false brethren privily brought in,' who disputed the truth of his Gospel, because he offered it and all its promises without stipulating that the convert should accept the Mosaic Law along with his new faith, and because he did not even insist upon the circumcision of the converted Gentile; thus, since they appealed to the authority of Jesus himself and of his chosen Twelve, they must doubtless have excited considerable distrust of Paul and his programme and have worked against him both directly and indirectly. But Paul was certain of the justice of his cause, while the immediate sense of his divine mission lent him additional strength, and he ventured to appeal to the Apostles themselves to decide the quarrel: that is to say, to recognise his rights and his liberty. It was a very judicious move of his to take with him his fellow-worker Barnabas, who had long been respected in Jerusalem, and Titus, the most distinguished of the Greeks he had himself converted; the 'pillars of the Church' in Jerusalem should see and hear this uncircumcised Christian, should learn what experiences he had to tell and listen to his prophetic words; then they should ask themselves whether the spirit which dwelt in him was of a different sort from theirs. Paul's expectations were fulfilled, for although there may have been a good deal of sympathy for those false brethren among the *community* of Jerusalem, the *elders* received Titus, uncircumcised as he was, into the Church, acknowledged the supernatural nature

of the summons that made Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, and with it his equality with Peter. This last concession was made necessary, in spite of all objections, by Paul's success, which could only be the work of God. The Jewish world they kept for themselves, but delivered the Gentiles over to Paul, and the seal was set upon the perfect harmony thus established, by Paul's promise to collect money among the converted Gentiles for the suffering Church at Jerusalem. Paul probably proposed this task himself, for his attitude towards the leaders of the Primitive Church would be much more happily attested by such a collection than by any written recommendations, which he would have been too proud to accept or to use. It is impossible to be on bad terms with or to despise the man from whom one accepts a favour, and, the conditions being what they were, love and mutual esteem must clearly have existed between giver and receiver.

There was now nothing to detain Paul longer in Jerusalem, and he returned to take up his interrupted task at Antioch in the old way. A visit from Peter, which took place soon after this, must have given him much pleasure by proving to the world the keen interest taken by the greatest of the Primitive Apostles in the welfare of the Gentile communities, and a friendly understanding among all the Christians of Antioch was promoted by it. But Peter was soon followed by 'certain men from James,' who protested against his eating with the uncircumcised as a breach of the Mosaic Law, and he and all the other Jewish Christians at Antioch, with the exception of Paul, were prevailed upon to abandon this custom of fellowship at meals, although till now no objection had been raised against it. Paul, however, regarded this change not only as a mere temporary compromise based on purely artificial grounds, but as a treacherous misinterpretation of the true Gospel, and at a meeting of the community when all the faithful, including the envoys of James, were present, he accused his fellow-Apostle in the bitterest terms of pusillanimity and even of treachery to the faith.¹

What the sequel was to this painful dispute we do not learn,

¹ Gal. ii. 11-21.

but we should have no justification for asserting that it resulted in a definite breach between the parties concerned. Even in the Epistle to the Galatians Paul speaks of Barnabas and Peter in far too friendly a way to leave room for the supposition that a dissolution of the agreement described in ii. 8, 10 was contemplated on the ground of this one serious difference. Paul does not relate the occurrence for the purpose of prejudicing his readers against Peter or of lowering him in their eyes, but simply to illustrate in the most striking way his own unchanging steadfastness and independence at a critical juncture. But it is easy to imagine that after these disputes he longed to turn his back upon Antioch and the neighbourhood where he and Barnabas had hitherto worked together, and that he began to seek some new field for his labours in distant lands. The statement in Acts xv. 40 fol., that Paul set out in company with one Silas (= Silvanus) but without Barnabas, is very probably correct; he first went through Syria and Cilicia 'confirming the churches' and doubtless encouraging them to resist Judaistic demands; and then, as a result of the visit of the Lycaonian and Pisidian brethren, he succeeded in gaining another travelling companion in the person of Timothy, so that with these two he could now set out on his great northward and north-westward journey through Galatia and Phrygia to the Troad, and even, contrary to his expectation, to Macedonia and Achaia. The incidents of these travels can best be ascertained by referring to the Epistles Paul wrote at the time. According to Acts xviii. 18-23 he journeyed from the capital of Achaia *via* Caesarea (in Palestine) and possibly Jerusalem (?) back to Antioch, but soon afterwards started on a second journey, of which the ultimate goal was Ephesus.

Hence we are accustomed to distinguish three missionary journeys; but in reality this merely encourages the false impression that Paul began his missionary career with the events of Acts xiii.; it is more practical to distinguish his *spheres of work*, thus; Arabia with Damascus for three years; Syria and the neighbouring districts for fourteen years (or fifteen if we consider the Cyprian voyage to have taken place *after* the assembly in Jerusalem); then after the dispute

with Peter, Galatia, Macedonia and Achaia (including Corinth) for three years, and finally Asia for over two and a quarter, according to Acts xix. 8 and 10, or for three full years according to xx. 31. The visits to Macedonia and Achaia included in this last period do not form a missionary journey in the strictest sense; Paul's gaze was now directed further westwards, towards Rome and Spain, and his intention rather was to take leave of his Greek communities, and merely to appear once more in Jerusalem with the fruits of a collection made during several years by the Greeks for their poorer brethren in that city. His arrival at Jerusalem for a feast of Pentecost probably took place one year after his departure from Ephesus. Here the heaviest blow of all was dealt him; at the demand of the Jews he was immediately taken prisoner and transported to Cæsarea; there, however, he was not definitely condemned, because he lodged an appeal to the Emperor, but after a tedious delay, lasting two years according to the Acts, was sent by order of the Procurator Festus to Rome by sea. His departure took place in early autumn, and owing to a shipwreck which compelled him to spend the winter in Malta he did not arrive in Rome until the spring of the next year. The last words of the Acts concerning him are that he lived there for two years longer, under military supervision, but otherwise unhindered in his labours for the Gospel.

With this the relative chronology of Paul's life is established with tolerable certainty. A period of seventeen years is required from his conversion to the so-called Apostolic Council of Acts xv. and Galatians ii., and another of ten or eleven years from that point to the last words of the Acts. But the task of assigning this chain of events to its place in general chronology is none the less difficult. As yet we know of only two fixed landmarks by which to guide ourselves: (a) King Aretas died in the year 40 A.D. at latest, so that Paul's flight from Damascus, which was caused by his ethnarch, could not have taken place later than that year; thus 37 A.D. is the *terminus ad quem* for his conversion. (b) In the summer of 62 the successor of Festus, one Albinus, was already at work in Judæa, so that Paul's

despatch as a prisoner to Rome cannot be dated later than the autumn of the year 61. It cannot, however, be placed much earlier, for Festus did not hold his office long, so that, *ceteris paribus*, the autumn of the year 60 would perhaps be the most probable date for Paul's departure from Cæsarea towards Rome. By calculating back from this point according to the dates given in the Acts—of which none but the two years for the Cæsarean imprisonment are open to doubt—we are able to fix the Apostolic Council at or near the year 52 and the conversion of Paul at the year 35. No objection can be raised against this last, for if Jesus was crucified in A.D. 29 or 30, five years would be amply sufficient to account for the development of a Messianic community into an abomination in the eyes of strict Pharisaism, and also for the corresponding development which changed Paul from a silent member of the school of Gamaliel into a furious persecutor—though one who already belonged at heart to the persecuted—of the community at Damascus. His execution at Rome in the time of Nero—a tradition which no one cares to dispute—would then fall in the year 63, and would have no connection, as we are so prone to assume, with the so-called Neronian persecution of the summer of 64. But in any case we should find it difficult to believe that Paul was ever suspected of incendiarism; while, when we take Nero's character and the state of things in Rome at that time into account, a sudden and fatal turn in the Apostle's trial, unexpected even by himself, would need no special explanation such as the unwonted agitation produced by the fire of Rome.

In recent times great popularity has been won by the hypothesis (which indeed is not a new one) that Paul was released at the end of the two years mentioned in Acts xxviii. 30, and that he set out on his travels once more, visiting Spain and also his old communities in the East, but that he was then again thrown into prison, and this time executed. Thus Zahn assumes that Paul left Rome in the autumn of the year 63, returned to it in the spring of 66 and was executed either at the end of that year or at the beginning of the next. Harnack finds room for this mysterious fourth journey between 59 and 63. Nothing, however, speaks in

favour of such an hypothesis except the interested but vain desire of apologists to save the Pastoral Epistles; the passage in the first Epistle of Clement¹ in which the martyrdom of Paul is mentioned in distinct terms (after that of Peter, to which, however, the reference is not quite so plain), gives us rather the impression that the victims of the persecution in question suffered *later* than Peter and Paul, for if the writer had known that Paul was martyred in 67 and the supposed incendiaries as early as 64, would he have passed on from the subject of Peter and Paul to speak of them with the words, 'To these men [Peter and Paul], who walked in such holy wise, was joined (*συνηθροίσθη*) a great host of the elect, who . . . have become a glorious ensample unto us'? We may search the whole of the Acts in vain for any indication that Paul was but temporarily debarred from his work; indeed the farewell discourse at Miletus points in the clearest terms to the very opposite conclusion. Nor can I detect in vv. xxviii. 30 fol. any reference whatever to a subsequent release of the Apostle; the words, 'he taught, no man forbidding him,' are surely meant in silent contrast to the implied sequel, that he was forbidden, and if Paul had taken up his teaching again afterwards in the old way the writer could hardly have kept silence on the subject. The rash idea, moreover, that Luke was keeping back this last period of the labours of Paul, together with the story of his glorious martyrdom, to form the material for a third book equal in bulk to the Gospel and the Acts, is destroyed by the reflection that even if he meant to include some of the doings of Peter, Matthias and Thomas, his material cannot have been sufficient. Simple-minded readers have construed a journey to Spain out of Romans xv. 28, without making the slightest effort to find a place for it in Paul's life; others with equal justice have discovered a reference in Philippians i. 25 and ii. 24 to his release after the first Roman imprisonment; but the Acts know nothing of this so-called 'primitive tradition.' With great tact the book breaks off at the last point at which the labours of the hero-Apostle for the Kingdom of God can be described—at the

¹ Ch. v. fol.

moment when he has succeeded in proclaiming the Word of the Cross in the West, at the very steps of the imperial throne,—and the writer refrains from relating the tragic ending of Paul's life because it was not his desire to write a biography of Paul, but to describe the triumphal march of the Gospel under the leadership of the Apostles. In his eyes the 'Acts of the Apostles' came to an end with the last day on which Paul could preach the Lord Jesus fully and frankly, 'no man forbidding him.'

2. With this rapid sketch of the Apostle's life we have not yet attained the most important materials for a realisation of his personality. This would require above all that we should absorb ourselves in his world of thought, in the grandeur of his peculiar religious convictions, and in his conception of the Gospel,—a task which must be left to another branch of the subject, New Testament theology, to discharge. But too much stress cannot be laid upon the fact that Paul was in no sense of the words a theologian or a dogmatist. Many of the errors of criticism—even of the most modern—arise from the habit of calling attention to supposed contradictions in the different Epistles, which Paul, it is thought, would never have made, or of seeking for a hard and fast line of development for his religious views, arranging the Epistles according to it, and rejecting everything which does not fit in with the arrangement. Paul was far too great a genius not to have room in his mind for ideas that differed very widely. Things Jewish and things anti-Jewish were almost evenly balanced in his thoughts and in his temperament, while he himself never observed the antagonism between them. This alone would necessitate a certain oscillation in his mind between free speculation and Rabbinical logic; but he never regarded himself as having nothing more to learn; rather he was always open by his very nature to new and higher knowledge, troubling himself little about the stages by which it was attained. His cry to the Philippians¹: 'If in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you: only, whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk,'—

¹ iii. 15 fol.

applied with at least equal force to himself. Nor must we forget that in his case even the knowledge which was absolute and incontestable might often be expressed in the most varied forms, according to his mood at the time, his adversaries, or the circumstances of the case.

But the fact remains that Paul has a right to be called the Apostle *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, the disciple who raised the Messianic faith, hitherto but the creed of a Jewish sect, to the position of a world-religion. Immense as were the inward difficulties he had to overcome at first—and not only, it seems, before his conversion—those which he encountered all his life from the outside world during the execution of his work can hardly have been less. The words of 2. Cor. xi. 23-29 show clearly enough how incomplete is the picture given in the Acts of his struggles and his heroism; every step that he took was won at the risk of his life, in the face of the hatred of Jews and fanatical Jewish Christians and of the contempt of the Gentiles; there was no indignity, no suffering, no misfortune that he was not forced to bear. Untiring in his labours as a preacher, he earned his livelihood by bodily toil, often at night,¹ and but rarely accepted presents even from his most faithful followers.² At the same time his health was by no means sound; the 'infirmity of the flesh' of Gal. iv. 13 can scarcely have been a mere passing trouble, and in 2. Cor. iv. 7-12 he dwells at length upon the 'dying' which he 'bears about in the body.' Moreover the 'thorn in the flesh' of 2. Cor. xii. 7-9 has given rise to the very probable suggestion that after his conversion he became an epileptic—a fact assuredly not unconnected with that highly strung religious temperament which was continually manifesting itself in 'visions' and 'revelations.' He remained unmarried, and never enjoyed the happiness of family life;³ his duties were all towards Christ and the Gospel, and rival duties towards man he could not undertake. It is true that through his Epistles we come to know of a whole host of helpers who willingly obeyed their master's orders, but even in later years he experienced disappointments⁴ like those caused him

¹ 1. Thess. ii. 9.

² 2. Cor. xi. 8 fol.; Philip. iv. 15.

³ 1. Cor. vii. 7, ix. 5.

⁴ Cf. Philip. ii. 20 fol.

the Jewish theologian within him, to identify himself with the Greek point of view, or even to recognise any justification for a conception of the world so different from his own. He was perhaps always too ready to yield to his so-called 'visions,' especially in shaping his plan of operations,¹ so that the charge of vacillation was not only raised against him but appears to have had some foundation. The passion that drove him to such questionable utterances against Jews and Judaists as those of Gal. v. 12 or Philip. iii. 2—which led him to pronounce the sharpest judgment of all—'for they all seek their own'—against friends who, perhaps for very good reasons, had for once not obeyed his call²—must undoubtedly have led him into indiscretions of speech in his intercourse with obstinate Gentiles; but he possessed dogged courage, unswerving faith in his subject and his calling, a passion for self-sacrifice however great, the ever infectious zeal of the enthusiast, wonderful animation and warmth of speech, and finally that touching tenderness of feeling shown in Philip. iv. 10, 20—qualities compared with which a few deficiencies of manner hardly weigh in the scale, and which could not fail to lay all the best of his converts, once gained, under the lasting spell of his influence.

3. A *writer* in the strictest sense Paul did not profess to be, nor is there any need to discuss the question whether he was specially qualified to be one or not. But he has left us some letters, addressed to fellow-believers, whether individuals or whole communities. They are *his* letters, even where the superscription tells us that one or more companions were writing with him; for the continual oscillation between 'I' and 'we'—which, by the way, is certainly not due to chance alone—shows that the responsibility for the contents rests only upon him. As he had had no sharers in the work of founding his communities, so he had no collaborators in writing his Epistles. These Epistles, however, in spite of the fact that they are always intended as writings of the moment addressed to a narrow circle of readers, yet approach much more nearly to the position of independent literary works than the average letters of great men

¹ 2. Cor. i. 15 fol.; Acts xvi. 7.

² Philip. ii. 21.

in modern times. For it is characteristic of Paul's writings that he can never confine himself to the narrow and individual aspect of a thing; unconsciously he will lift the smallest question into a higher sphere and place it on a wider basis: take his instruction to the Corinthians on 'spiritual gifts' and their different values, for instance, and see to what a lofty level he raises it by the sudden insertion of the hymn to love! Again, he likes to be certain of his ground before he decides a point, and his arguments habitually lead down deeper and deeper into the very foundations of his faith.

The Epistle to the Romans is in its main features written according to a scheme already well thought out; and the digressions with which in 2. Corinthians iii.-v. Paul surrounds his tolerably simple theme—that he is not ashamed of his weakness and has no need to defend himself—reveal a height of art which in anyone else would suggest conscious skill. No later doctor of the Church, not even excepting Tertullian and Augustine, ever delivered himself, in thirty pages, of thoughts so abundant, so bold and so profound as those Paul sets forth here in three; while the loftiness of tone which he displays prohibits any idea that he was merely jotting down a hasty answer to a letter received from the community—a message on paper. Paul was fully conscious of the duty laid upon him, even in absence, to share with his communities the best of that spiritual grace which had been vouchsafed to him. Thus, without knowing or intending it, Paul became by his letters the creator of a Christian literature. It has indeed been asserted that he was already familiar with some writings of Christian origin, but this cannot be proved. As to older usage, he follows it so far as to begin his letters with an address in which the names of writer and recipient are conjoined in a salutation, and to end them with good wishes; but the numerous additions in the address to the names of both sender and recipient at once betray their Christian origin, while the words of greeting themselves are especially Christian in form (*χαρίς ὑμῖν*, etc., for *χαίρειν*, *χαίρετε* and the like).

More important, however, is the fact—which *we* can only perceive through his Epistles—that Paul created a new

language for the new religion. Of course he understood the Hebrew that was spoken at that time in the schools of Jerusalem, but there can be no doubt that Greek must have been much more natural to a man who studied the Old Testament almost exclusively in the Greek translation, or Septuagint; and the hypothesis that his writings were translated into Greek from a first draft in Aramaic is almost as romantic as the suggestion that on his missionary travels he was only able to communicate with the Gentiles by means of an interpreter. He was, on the contrary, fully master of the language, not indeed of the Greek of the Classical period, but of the colloquial 'Hellenistic' (ἡ κοινή), into which he had also infused a strong Hebrew element arising from his education and his study of the Septuagint. But he was not satisfied with the materials furnished by these two sources; wherever it seemed necessary he had the courage to coin new words and phrases—ἀκαιρεῖσθαι, for instance, in Philip. iv. 10, and the expression ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι—and to words long in existence he sometimes gave a new meaning. His writings are not equalled in point of vocabulary by any part of the Septuagint, and even within the New Testament he is superior to all in the wealth and variety of his expressions and his boldness in using them. But his style is neither smooth, elegant nor correct, and he himself never considered that he excelled in the art of writing.¹ He pays little attention to euphony or to the artistic construction and rounding-off of his periods; the words *συνκοινωνὸς τῆς πίστεως τῆς πρώτης τῆς ἐλπίδας*, for instance, of Rom. xi. 17 are oratorically ugly, as well as the thrice repeated ἐν ὑμῖν of 1. Cor. xi. 18 and 19 and the ἐν παντί beside ἐν πᾶσι of 2. Cor. xi. 6. The passage beginning at Rom. ii. 18 is overburdened with synonymous expressions; nor does his tendency towards pleonasms reveal itself only in the later Epistles; γάρ is repeated four times in quick succession in the short sentences of Rom. ii. 11–14,² and δέ seven times in 1. Cor. vii. 6–12 and xiv. 4⁶–6⁷. The periods in Philip. iii. 20 fol., iii. 7–11, ii. 5–11 and i. 27–30, also, are halting and confused.

In a letter wholly devoid of punctuation, many of the Apostle's words must have been unintelligible, although in

¹ 2. Cor. xi. 6.

² Cf. 1. Cor. xi. 18–23.

dictating he might have made them quite clear to his secretary through accentuation and gesture; unintentionally, too, a few difficult anacolutha arose, and even in the Epistle to the Romans it may easily be seen that Paul never kept to any carefully thought-out arrangement of his sentences, but put down whatever the inspiration of the moment suggested to him. His chain of thought is often disconnected, his conclusions—even apart from the groundless character of his exegetic method—not above reproach; similes and allegories miss the mark because the general conception is faulty, and the complaint of 2. Pet. iii. 16 that in the Epistles of Paul are 'some things hard to be understood' is not without justice. Certainly they are not easy reading with their throng of hurrying thoughts, their tersely expressed ideas, sometimes no more than indicated, their passages of dialectic demanding the strictest attention beside stirring outbursts of stormy passion. Nevertheless Paul must be ranked as a great master of language, for his words are never forced or artificial, but always suit his subject and his mood, whether he is advising, exhorting, threatening, rebuking or consoling. Unconsciously he makes use of the tricks of popular speech with the greatest effect, sometimes of striking metaphors,¹ or of short and compressed word-pictures,² of rhetorical questions³ and of effective anaphoræ,⁴ and even groups of antitheses,⁵ word-plays⁶ and oxymora⁷ are not wanting. But he avoids all straining for effect through the observance of oratorical rules; he finds without effort the most striking form for his lofty ideas; and it is because his innermost self breathes through every word that most of his Epistles bear so unique a charm.

4. We must not, however, indiscriminately accept as Pauline all that the Church has handed down to us under

¹ Gal. v. 15; 2. Cor. xi. 20.

² 1. Cor. xiii. 1-2; Gal. iv. 19.

³ Rom. ii. 21-26.

⁴ E.g., the 4 πάντα of 1 Cor. xiii. 7, the 8 οὐ of xiii. 4-6, and cf. the fine monotony of phrase of Rom. ii. 17 fol.

⁵ E.g., 2. Cor. vi. 8-10.

⁶ E.g., that in Rom. iii. 2 fol., on πιστεύεσθαι, ἀπιστεῖν, πίστις, and in Gal. v. 7 fol. on πείθεσθαι and πεισμονή.

⁷ Rom. i. 20, τὰ ἰδωτά αὐτοῦ . . . καθορᾶται.

that name. The Epistle to the Hebrews does not even profess to be by Paul, and of the remaining thirteen a few are exceedingly doubtful, while about half are still hotly contested. We must at any rate keep the possibility in view, not only that various writings early became attributed to the Apostle through error and false conjecture (like most of the 'pseudo-Cyprianic' tracts to Cyprian), but that they were deliberately composed and circulated under his name. We should do well, however, to avoid the word 'forgery' in this connection; it is only to the advantage of an exceedingly narrow view of history that we should attach ideas of fraud and deceit to writings published by men of a later generation under cover of some honoured name in the past; we thus make it easy to say that Holy Church cannot possibly have accepted such scandalous fabrications. The boundless credulity of ecclesiastical circles, to which so many of the New Testament Apocrypha—among them an actual Epistle of Jesus¹—have owed their lasting influence, will not be got rid of by a profession of moral indignation, any more than we shall do away with the facts that the ethical notion of literary property is a plant of modern growth (a history of editions ought to be written side by side with that of the Pseudepigrapha!); that believers frequently borrowed from the books of other believers, or of unbelievers, without mentioning any source and without considering themselves in any way as thieves; and that with the best intentions and the cleanest consciences they put such words into the mouth of a revered Apostle as they wished to hear enunciated with Apostolic authority to their contemporaries, while yet they did not regard themselves in the smallest degree as liars and deceivers. Not only would the indifference of orthodox theology to questions of genuineness go to prove this, but the countless pseudepigrapha known to us arose for the most part within the Church itself, and there is really no specific difference between the arbitrary way in which copyists and exegetists treated the sacred writings, or the literary habit, say, of composing discourses to be placed under the name of Peter or Paul, or the representation of Jesus as delivering a sermon on a given occasion which had first been put together out of several separate

¹ To King Abgarus of Edessa (see Euseb. *Hist. Ecc.* I. 13).

fragments,—and the attempt to construct complete Pauline or at any rate Apostolic letters after the existing models. The *adulteratio scripturae* of which the Fathers occasionally speak with such horror, consisted in giving an heretical meaning to the word of God, *forgery* in making heretical additions to it, or removing by erasure some of the fine gold of the original. And if even some modern scholars often show an entirely undeveloped sense of the difference between historical truth and what they consider as religious truth, we must not blame the Christians of the first and second centuries if, with still stronger subjectivism, they applied their conception of truth solely to the substance of their religious consciousness, and were quite indifferent as to the form in which it was clothed.

The anecdote told by Tertullian in his 'De Baptismo,' ch. 17, of the Asiatic Presbyter who had to give up his office for fraudulently ascribing his 'Acts of Thekla' to Paul, is a case in point, for the Presbyter declares that it was his love for Paul that drove him to write, and therefore he cannot have had an evil conscience; while his judges, including our informant, were not shocked by his literary fraud as such, but by his venturing to advocate heresies in his book, such as that of the right of women to preach and baptize. So that it is not necessary to point to the widespread custom among the philosophers of that age, especially among the Pythagoreans, of passing off their own writings as the works of the most ancient masters, or to the infinity of spurious compositions then current under the names of Demosthenes, Alexander, or Plato, the authors of which were certainly not mere deceivers; nor even to recall the fact that in Jewish apocalyptic literature all revelations without exception are ascribed to men of old—Daniel, Ezra, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc.,—for even without these parallels we may assert that the tendency in the Early Church towards 'literary disguises' was just as strong as it was *naïve*. In the West a certain perception of the difference between romance and history was perhaps more common, and certainly Irenaeus and Augustine would never have composed an Epistle under the name of Paul. But even here the criticism applied to anyone who put himself forward under the aegis of

Apostolic authority was only concerned with questions of tradition and orthodoxy; any work that could produce plausible evidence and was unexceptionable as to doctrine, was allowed to pass unchallenged. It would thus be more than wonderful if from among this mass of pseudo-Apostolic writings none had found their way into the New Testament: more extraordinary still, however, if all the twenty-one canonical Epistles were to belong to that class, for, after all, a forgery is usually an imitation of some greater original, as is so clearly shown in all the 'apocryphal' Gospels, Apocalypses, and Histories of the Apostles. Paul must first have written his Epistles and these Epistles have won repute and influence, before those who had not the courage to appear openly under their own names could attempt to influence Christendom in the customary form of the didactic letter, or could put forward their Apostolic reflections under cover of the name of Peter, Paul or John.

Four of the Epistles of Paul have not been disputed even by the Tübingen School, and only those who lack all critical power have attempted to shake them. They are those to the Romans, the Corinthians and the Galatians. The three Pastoral Epistles are now generally regarded as spurious, but the majority of those who hold this view are in favour of the genuineness of 1. Thessalonians, Philippians and Philemon; 2. Thessalonians and Ephesians are almost universally given up, as well as large parts of Colossians. I do not, however, hold that the objections even to these last three are insuperable.

§ 4. *The First Epistle to the Thessalonians*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. x., in which W. Bornemann undertakes the Epistles to the Thessalonians (1894, 5th and 6th ed.); 'Hand-Commentar,' ii. 1 (1. and 2. Thess. and 1. and 2. Cor. by P. W. Schmiedel, 1892), and P. Schmidt: 'Der 1^{ste} Thessalonicherbrief neu erklärt, nebst einem Excurs über den 2^{ten} gleichnamigen Brief' (1885).]

1. After the address and greeting of i. 1, Paul expresses in somewhat hyperbolic terms his grateful satisfaction at the steadfastness in faith of his Thessalonian friends, wherein

he hopes that they may become an example to others far beyond the borders of Macedonia and Achaia (i. 2-10). Parallel with this runs ii. 1-16, where the Apostle calls to mind his former experiences in Thessalonica—the dark side of them as well as the bright—before expressing in 17-20 his earnest desire for another meeting. But this being impossible, he has at all events sent Timothy to obtain news of the community; news on the whole so reassuring that he feels he can now only wish it further increase by the grace of God in love and holiness.¹ Here follows the most clearly marked division in the Epistle; in the next two chapters Paul makes some earnest exhortations, to which the mention in iii. 10 of what was lacking in his readers' faith and the good wishes of vv. 11-13 form a delicate transition from the tone of grateful remembrance of the earlier part. In iv. 1-12 he protests against certain relics of heathen immorality, especially with regard to their sexual relations and their ordinary dealings one with another, and rebukes a scandalous tendency to idleness which had arisen through their excited expectation of the approaching millennium. To this he attaches some eschatological instruction,² declaring first in iv. 13-18 that Christians who had already 'fallen asleep' should not yield precedence at the Parusia to those who were still alive, and then warning his readers in v. 1-11 that nothing was known about the coming of the Last Day, and that their only care must be to see that they were prepared for it at any moment. In what their preparation was to consist he explains in a few more particular exhortations touching the life of the community, ending in good wishes and promises;³ then comes a short and hearty farewell.⁴

2. Those to whom the Epistle is addressed are named in i. 1 as the Christians of Thessalonica, the brilliant merchant city on the Gulf of Thermae which was at that time the capital of Macedonia. According to i. 9 and ii. 14, the community consisted entirely of Greeks, former idolaters—a statement which contradicts the account in Acts xvii. 1-9—who had been converted to God and the expectation of the

¹ iii. 1-13.

² v. 12-24.

³ iv. 13-v. 11.

⁴ 25-28.

return of Christ by the preaching of Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, the writers of the Epistle. These three had come to Thessalonica from Philippi, where they had been 'shamefully entreated,'¹ probably in the year 53, and according to Acts xvii. 2 they had only stayed three weeks, because the mob, incited against them by the numerous Jews of Thessalonica, had then driven them away. Now the above-mentioned shortcomings in the manner of life of the community would certainly favour the supposition that it had not enjoyed long years of Apostolic guidance; but that Paul should only have made a 'three weeks' stay there is wholly inconsistent with the remarks he makes in ii. 7 and 10 about his personal relations with his readers, while his description of the toil and trouble he had had there and of his daily and nightly labours would under such circumstances sound boastful. Moreover, three weeks would certainly not have been sufficient for the two gifts of love mentioned in Philip. iv. 16, to have reached him from Philippi. He had left Thessalonica abruptly with his two companions, heavy at heart and full of anxious fears lest the work so well begun should be destroyed behind his back, especially since the Thessalonian converts had from the very first been sorely oppressed by their compatriots. Since he could not return thither himself, as he would have preferred to do, he had sent back Timothy from Athens² to strengthen the forsaken community, only Silvanus remaining with him.

3. The Epistle was not written from Athens³ but from Corinth, whither Paul had betaken himself after his somewhat unsuccessful appearance in the former city.⁴ For we must infer from i. 7 and 8, that Achaia possessed by now a considerable number of converts, and Paul evidently felt himself as much at home there as he did in Macedonia. Six months at least must have elapsed since his departure from Thessalonica: probably more, for Timothy's journey there and back⁵ would have occupied some space of time, and Paul's *repeated* plans of travelling thither⁶ cannot be fitted into a few weeks. Besides this, one or two members of the Thessa-

¹ ii. 2; Acts xvi. 16 fol.² iii. 1. fol.³ iii. 1.⁴ Acts xviii. 1.⁵ iii. 6.⁶ ii. 18.

lonian community had died in the interval,¹ whereas nothing of the kind had occurred during Paul's visit, and since the whole body did not consist of more than a few hundred souls this circumstance would also seem to suggest a longer period. Hence the Epistle could hardly have been written before 53 (for the end of 52 is the earliest date at which Paul could have set foot on European soil) and certainly not after 54. But the inducements for Paul to write it immediately after Timothy's return are obvious. They may be summed up as follows: his objects were to draw the community closer to himself, and to sever it more completely from heathenism—but more especially, also, to correct some misconceptions concerning the Second Coming and the fate of Christians who had died before it. In all essentials, of course, Timothy's report of the Thessalonians had been favourable; he could say that they had remained true to the Gospel against all attacks; but a certain mistrust of Paul and of the sincerity of his interest in their congregation had also arisen, which was probably promoted from without—the words of ii. 15 fol. seem to justify the conjecture that Paul suspected Jewish intrigues. Hence in chap. ii. he strikes an apologetic note, while in i. and iii. he declares how he loves the Church and takes pride in it, only he cannot now propose the one proof of his sincere attachment to it which was so eagerly demanded²—a visit to Thessalonica itself. Besides these reasons for writing, it was now becoming manifest in various ways that the Thessalonians were as yet very scantily instructed in the truths of the faith and their bearing on the Christian standard of life: the idea, for instance, of a resurrection of the dead had still to be solemnly proclaimed to them. An enthusiastic section among them³ were behaving as though the great convulsions of the Last Day were already upon them and the old order of things and the old duties all swept away; while side by side with these stood others who in their reaction against such a course went too far in the opposite direction, clinging tenaciously to the old views and so missing the profound meaning of the Christian life. Quarrels and insubordination to the elders⁴ were the

¹ iv. 13 fol.

² iii. 6, 10.

³ iv. 11 fol.

v. 12–15.

the ruling passion of his heart. Probably Paul had recently been made to suffer heavily by the Jews at Corinth, just as they had been the instigators of the agitation against him and the community at Thessalonica. Without prophesying, he could show that God's judgment had already been fulfilled upon them—he was thinking, not of risings suppressed, of the famine described in Acts xi. 28, or of the Edict of Claudius,¹ but merely of what he fears to be the incurable blindness of his countrymen. Is not the same thought expressed in 1. Cor. ii. 8 and ii. 6? Verse 16^{a, b} bears in the highest degree the Pauline stamp. In form, the same is true of the abrupt conclusion 16^c, for which a quotation from some Jewish Apocryphon or a gloss on the text of Paul's Greek Bible has been—quite superfluously—suggested. As a matter of fact, both verses read like echoes from an angry indictment lately flung in the face of his persecutors by Paul. I can thus see no sufficient grounds for removing verses ii. 15 and 16 or even only ii. 16^c, as interpolations, from the genuine Epistle of Paul.

§ 5. *The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians*

[Cf. works mentioned in preceding §; also A. Klöpper's 'Der 2^{te} Brief an die Thess.' in 'Theologische Studien und Skizzen aus Ostpreussen' (ii. 73–140, 1889), a clever but somewhat discursive defence of the Pauline authorship of the Epistle; and F. Spitta, 'Der 2^{te} Brief an die Thess.' in 'Zur Geschichte u. Literatur d. Urchristentums,' vol. i. pp. 109–154, 1893 (Timothy the author, or rather the re-caster, of a Jewish Apocalypse of the time of Caligula). For ii. 1–12 cf. Bousset, 'Der Antichrist,' 1895.]

1. Upon the opening address and greeting, there follows, in the rest of the first chapter, a thanksgiving for the faithfulness of the community, especially under afflictions, the recompense for which would not be wanting on the Last Day. This prepares the way for the leading passage of the Epistle (ii. 1–12), which continues and completes teaching already given by word of mouth concerning the Parusia, a subject in regard to which Paul's readers had been much disquieted. The Day of the Lord, Paul argues, cannot yet have appeared, for even Antichrist (so, at least, following 1. John,

¹ Acts xviii. 2.

we are accustomed to sum up the various terms used by Paul in his description of this mysterious caricature of the returning Christ), who must first have brought the world's sin to its climax, had not yet been revealed ; he was still only working in secret, being restrained for the present by another power, of whom the Thessalonians knew. Next come—still with the idea of the future in view—personal wishes, hopes, and requests of the Apostle for himself and for the Thessalonians,¹ followed by a few earnest warnings against restless idleness and an excitement that led to neglect of duty.² Lastly we have the farewell greeting, specially emphasised as written by Paul's own hand.

2. If the Epistle is Pauline it must have been written *after* 1. Thessalonians, in which case the words of ii. 15 may be readily taken as a reference to that Epistle ; any correspondence between Paul and the community *before* the First Epistle, is excluded by what is told us there in vv. ii. 17–iii. 6. Moreover, it should be placed very soon after the latter, probably in the same year, for the relations between writer and receivers have not substantially altered between the two dates. Paul is still accompanied by Silvanus and Timothy,³ and the complaint in iii. 2 about the 'unreasonable and wicked men' reminds us forcibly of the mood in which he wrote verse ii. 15 of the First Epistle. The Apostle's opinion of the community, too, is very similar both in praise and blame to what it had formerly been, except that the evils created among a certain section of its members by false expectations of the future, and the general restlessness and excitability, seem to have increased, so that he desires to have disciplinary measures adopted in restraint of such dangerous elements. These erring spirits, it appears, appealed on the one hand to visions seen by them (*μήτε διὰ πνεύματος*) and on the other to the word and writing of Paul. This rouses him to an emphatic denial of the latter in ii. 2, while in iii. 17 he points expressly to his handwriting, in which the final greeting was always written, as the sign by which all genuine epistles from him might be recognised. From what source Paul had derived his

¹ ii. 13–iii. 5.

² iii. 6–16.

³ i. 1.

information we are not told, and from the indefinite 'we hear' of iii. 11 it may be concluded that the bearer of it did not wish to be named; at any rate it cannot have been one of Paul's travelling-companions. The necessity—on which his informant must have laid great stress—for the Apostle to assume once more a decided attitude towards these fanatics must have been the occasion for the Second Epistle.

3. The authenticity of 2. Thessalonians has, however, been disputed by the great majority of investigators, not merely of the Tübingen school, from Baur onwards. The Epistle, they argue, shows remarkably little connection with its predecessor of the same name; vv. ii. 1-12 excepted, it is in fact nothing but a paraphrase of the First Epistle, with characteristic departures from the Pauline phraseology. Chap. ii., again, the section peculiar to the Epistle, is full of ideas quite alien to Paul, while the warning against spurious epistles, of which there can hardly have been a thought during Paul's lifetime, sounds as though the later author wished to ward off such suspicions from himself. The great prominence given to Apostolic authority and power¹ would also seem to point to a later time, when the Church gladly represented her laws of discipline as derived from Paul himself.

The least important of these arguments are those referring to the phraseology, for on the whole the style is so thoroughly Pauline that one might indeed admire the forger who could imitate it so ingeniously. For the rest, every Epistle contains some peculiarities; other features again we need not recognise as such: there is no necessity, for instance, to apply the title 'Lord,' which Paul always reserves elsewhere for Jesus Christ, to God at any point in this Epistle, not even in iii. 3, 5; and the designation of Jesus as 'our Lord'² is the term most familiar to the author. It would certainly be very suspicious if 2. Thess. designated Christ as God, a usage unknown in Paul; but if we turn to i. 12 we find that 'our God' means something quite different from 'the Lord Jesus Christ,' although it is but *one* grace that both bestow. The numerous points of affinity with 1. Thess. are explained, on the one hand, by the similarity in the circumstances under which both

¹ ii. 15, iii. 4, 6 9 fol. and 14.

² Cf. iii. 4, *πεποιθαμεν ἐν κυρίῳ*.

were written, for in the interval Paul can have had very little news from the community, and that little perhaps in writing; on the other, by the fact that when certain Thessalonians justified their errors by appealing to his Epistle (and his spoken words), Paul did not carefully go through the draft of his previous Epistle, but called to mind as accurately as he could what he had already said on the subject to the community by word of mouth and by letter. He lays stress on his authority, for pedagogic reasons, as in 1. Corinthians¹; on the other hand, he bestows such unlimited praise² upon each individual in the community as no later defender of official authority would have thought of putting into the mouth of the Apostle. And if, in opposition to certain other statements of his, he declares in iii. 9 that his motive in labouring so diligently was to give the Thessalonians a good example, there is no need to point to the preceding verse, where he states as his motive 'that we might not be chargeable to any of you;' for this shifting of his point of view for purposes of exhortation is a very common characteristic of Paul, and is in this connection specially adroit. 'You pious idlers,' he seems to say, 'you appeal to me; why, then, do you entirely neglect to follow the example of unceasing toil that I have set you?' Moreover if—much to Paul's astonishment—they had appealed to an Epistle of his, they may very well have meant 1. Thessalonians; they were pointing to vv. v. 1–11 in it³ as their justification, since they found that continual watchfulness and sobriety were not compatible with the old rules of life. Moreover, by the aid of an interpretation the like of which is still common at the present day, they managed to employ vv. 2, 3, 4, 5 in support of their thesis, 'the day of light is already here.'

Paul, naturally, was not conscious of having written them a syllable in this sense, and so he concluded from the tidings that had just reached him from Thessalonica that a forged letter was circulating there under his name. This mistaken idea of his would be amply sufficient to explain ii. 2 as well as iii. 17. But whoever credits one of the Macedonian

¹ iv. 21 and v. 3–5.² i. 3 and ii. 13.³ Cf. ii. 16.

fanatics, not only with the unexampled audacity, but with the unexampled stupidity of composing a letter in the name of the Apostle while he still remained in the neighbourhood, has a still easier explanation of ii. 2. Only he must needs confess that the mania for forgery must have been uncommonly strong not to have been restrained by the most unpromising circumstances, nay not even by the Parusia itself.¹ It cannot be disputed that Paul had by now adopted certain fixed habits in his correspondence; and we are certainly not justified in referring the words *ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ* to 1. and 2. Corinthians and Galatians, which were of course not written in the year 53-54. Paul must have written countless epistles both before and after 2. Thessalonians, of which all traces have disappeared.

The chief difficulty, however, seems to me to lie in ii. 1-12, the passage which so evidently forms the kernel of the Epistle that any hypothesis which inclines to treat it, together with a few other inconvenient verses, as a later interpolation inserted into a genuine Pauline Epistle, should be avoided from the very outset. It seems a very plausible supposition, however, that a later unknown writer might have composed the Epistle, with as close a resemblance as possible to 1. Thessalonians in its minor details, simply in order to make the ideas of ii. 1-12 appear genuinely Apostolic, or even in order to substitute for the First Epistle, whose prophecies presented difficulties to a generation more reserved in their eschatological beliefs, one similar in all other respects but avoiding that danger. According to their different interpretations of this passage, 2. Thessalonians has been variously assigned by those who deny its authenticity, either to some date before 70 A.D., or to the reign of Trajan, about 110.

In the passage beginning at ii. 1 the idea that the day of the Lord had already come is contradicted, since before the coming of Christ, the falling away, the coming of the Man of Sin, must take place. This Abomination was indeed already moving through the existing world in secret, but the community knew what power it was that held him back, and until this was withdrawn, the time of the Gainsayer *κατ' ἐξοχήν* was not at hand, much less the hour for the return of Christ, which would instantly bring about the annihilation of the Lawless One.

¹ . . . 'by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present.'

This is a complete eschatological system, and there are some who like to call the passage a miniature Apocalypse; it does indeed remind us often enough of the Apocalypse of John, although the literary dependence of the one on the other ought never to have been asserted. And in truth Paul's writings nowhere else present any trace of such ideas; in 1. Thess. v. he says that the day of the Second Coming is not to be determined, but will come as 'a thief in the night,' when it is least expected; here, on the contrary, he calculates minutely what events must separate the present from the Day of the Lord. Nor can the passage be taken as a further development of the ideas set forth in 1. Thess., any more than as a foreshadowing of the eschatological views of the later Epistles, since according to ii. 5 Paul had already communicated to his readers by word of mouth all that he here announced to them. The references to contemporary history which some have thought it necessary to discern in the two chief ideas—of the Man of Sin, and of the power restraining him—in the first to Caligula, Nero, or a pseudo-Nero, to a false Messiah, or to an upholder of heretical doctrines; in the second, to Agrippa, Claudius, Vespasian or Trajan—would, if proved, scarcely admit the possibility of Pauline authorship for this apocalypse. But they are unnecessary, especially the suggested connection with Caligula's impious design of desecrating the Temple: sufficient historical background is supplied by the events in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

My own opinion is that the undeniable difficulties which this chapter presents can, after all, be most easily solved by assuming its Pauline authorship. There is no actual *contradiction* between 1. Thess. iv. and v. and this Epistle; Paul may very well have given utterance to both views verbally in Thessalonica, as he himself tells us in vv. v. 2 of the First Epistle and ii. 5 of the Second; and here, too, it may be observed that, as the matter contained in ii. 6–10 of the Second Epistle is partially new to his readers, so also to the image in vv. 3 and 4 a few touches are now added for the first time, for the *ταῦτα* of verse 5 does not pretend to cover every syllable. Perhaps it covers even less in reality than in the thought of the writer. But as to the Parusia, the union of the faithful

act eschatological extravagance in the Church by destroying its fundamental presuppositions, he set about his task very badly. As a matter of fact he only substitutes for one exciting theory of the last things another equally exciting.

It may be admitted that 2. Thess. is in no sense a great work. The Epistle is limited in range and proportionately poor in original thoughts: but in Paul's case, as in others, it was more important to find the right word at the right time than to utter sublime mysteries which did not profit those who could not understand them (see 1. Cor. xiv. 6). Assuredly, by this short letter he both gave the Thessalonians food for their imagination, and strengthened their power of comprehension.

§ 6. *The Epistle to the Galatians*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. vii., by F. Sieffert (1899); Hand-Commentar ii. 2; Gal. Rom. Phil. by R. A. Lipsius (1892); C. Holsten's 'Das Evangelium des Paulus' (1880), a complete analysis of the connection of thought between Galatians and 1. Corinthians, carried out with as much single-minded devotion to the subject as strict critical insight, but a work in which Paul is judged too one-sidedly by the rules of logic. It is interesting to compare this with a book which may be similarly described and yet is quite different in result, the 'Brief des Paulus an die Galater' of M. Kahler (1884). Also A. Schlatter's 'Der Galaterbrief ausgelegt für Bibelleser' (1890), an independent work not entirely without scientific merit in spite of its edifying tendency; J. B. Lightfoot's 'St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians' (1892), the most complete collection we have of technical material for the interpretation of the text; E. Schürer's 'Was ist unter *Γαλατία* in der Überschrift des Galaterbriefs zu verstehen?' ('Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie,' 1892, p. 460), and W. M. Ramsay's 'A Historical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians' in the *Expositor* for 1899, p. 57. (See above, p. 33.)]

1. Apart from the address and greeting of the first verses and a brief final summary in vi. 11-18, Galatians consists of three clearly marked divisions, beginning respectively at i. 6, iii. 1 and v. 13. At the point where the Apostle usually expresses his gratitude, he gives vent in this Epistle¹ to painful surprise that his readers should have fallen away

¹ i. 6-10.

from his true Gospel to follow a different and accursed one, as against which he declares that *his* Gospel was 'not after man.'¹ This thesis, to establish which is the main object of the Epistle, is first placed on an *historical* basis² by the assertion that neither his Gospel nor his Apostolate was 'received of man.' In support of this he first points to his call and to his seventeen years' activity,³ in which there was no question of any dependence on man, and then⁴ relates how, without sacrificing a particle of his own Gospel, he was recognised in Jerusalem by the pillars of the Church as the Apostle of the Gentiles, with rights equal to their own.

Then follows the strongest proof of his independence⁵—the account of how he publicly rebuked the great Cephas at Antioch, and upheld the equal rights of the Gentile Christians against him. The recapitulation of the speech he made on that occasion forms the transition to the second division, *the actual demonstration of the truth and divinity of the Gospel of freedom from the Law*. In iii. 1-5 he reminds the Galatians of their own experiences, of how they received the Holy Ghost, not through observance of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ; and then in the following verses⁶ he appeals to the witness of Scripture itself, which in Abraham's time, long before the Law appeared, made its promises dependent upon faith alone. The Law was not thereby set aside—it did not pretend to be more than a 'schoolmaster,' an expedient of secondary importance⁷—but now the appearance of Christ, the seed of promise, had put an end to the period of bondage and raised us from the position of slaves to that of free sons and heirs,⁸ who by falling back into the service of the Law would do no better than return to paganism.⁹ And then, with a sudden change from the didactic tone to one of moving tenderness, he appeals to the feelings of the Galatians and the childlike love that they formerly bore him, in order to tear them away from these new false friends of theirs.¹⁰ Next, from iv. 21 to v. 12, he again takes up the argument against the Law from the

¹ i. 11.² i. 6-ii. 21.³ i. 13-24.⁴ ii. 1-10.⁵ ii. 11-21.⁶ iii. 6-18.⁷ iii. 19-24.⁸ iii. 25-iv. 7.⁹ iv. 8-11.¹⁰ iv. 12-20.

Law itself, with an allegorical turning of the story of Ishmael and Isaac, repudiating all half-measures and urging upon his readers the necessity of choosing between bondage and freedom, damnation and grace—for in his passionate excitement he cannot but picture to himself all that they had at stake, or refrain from bitter imprecations against their deluders (*οἱ ἀναστατούντες ὑμᾶς*). But in order to prevent any misunderstanding by which 'freedom from the Law' might be interpreted as a danger to morality and mutual love, he adds the explanation¹: they are to 'walk in the Spirit,' for the Spirit of God which is brought by faith cannot endure the presence of any of the 'works of the flesh.' A few special words of advice are added² against self-conceit and egotism, but the main idea is not lost sight of—that salvation and eternal life can only be reaped where the good seed has been scattered on the soul. So that in practice also the Gospel proves itself to be divine by the moral results which it produces. Greetings and personal requests would here be out of place; all those to whom the letter is directed were in danger of going astray, and with a hand that trembles with emotion he now addresses to all a last earnest cry of warning.³

2. The strong excitement under which the Epistle is written excludes all idea of forgery, and explains the occasional obscurities of expression, as well as the audacities or flaws in the argument, better than any theory of interpolation. Every sentence shows why Paul had taken up his pen: the Christians of Galatia were in danger of falling a prey to a false Gospel. Agitators hostile to Paul⁴ had penetrated into the community, among them at least one person, probably, of conspicuous authority⁵—although that this was either Peter or Barnabas is equally unlikely. They had made a deep impression, inexplicable to Paul, upon the Galatians, who were evidently not as yet sufficiently clear and steadfast in their faith.⁶ Paul, standing in the very thick of the fight, was unable to impute any but selfish motives to these men⁷; he calls down a curse upon them,⁸ and declares that the accept-

¹ v. 13-25.² v. 26-vi. 10.³ vi. 11-18.⁴ *οἱ παράγοντες ὑμᾶς*, i. 7, v. 10, vi. 12 fol.⁵ v. 10.⁶ i. 6, iii. 1, v. 7.⁷ i. 7, iv. 17, vi. 12 fol.⁸ i. 8, v. 12.

ance of their Gospel was equivalent to a forfeiture of grace.¹ Any compact with them he felt to be out of the question. Accordingly he bids his readers choose uncompromisingly between himself and them,² even though they abstained from direct attack upon him, offered to explain his silence as to certain claims of the new religion on the ground of a teacher's consideration for his flock,³ and even attempted to base themselves to some extent upon his authority.⁴ Indirectly, however, they must doubtless have striven to detach the Galatians from him, to represent him as an authority of secondary rank, who had only heard of Christ and his Gospel through the medium of the Primitive Apostles, and therefore had no right to proclaim a free Gospel in opposition to those who had given him his commission. Paul deals with this point from i. 15 to ii. 21, and in ii. 7 actually represents himself as undoubtedly the highest human authority for the Gentile world.

But the question at issue was not one of form; these agitators wished to impose upon the Galatians⁵ the Law under which they themselves had been born and bred, or at least to exact from them a strict observance of its chief provisions, such as circumcision⁶ and the celebration of the Jewish feasts. Above all they naturally demanded the keeping of the Sabbath,⁷ as an essential condition of the salvation promised to the children of Abraham.⁸ They themselves had not, like Paul,⁹ opposed these 'works of the Law' to 'Faith,' but had persuaded themselves, and then with very intelligible success the Galatians, that perfect righteousness, the very object for which the believer struggled, could only be attained by the strict fulfilment of the will of God made manifest in the Law.¹⁰ In reply to this Paul defines his point of view in the clearest way: the Law and Faith, in his eyes, were mutually exclusive, damnation being as indissolubly connected with the one as grace with the other.¹¹

¹ v. 4.

² v. 7, 9.

³ i. 10.

⁴ i. 8, καὶ ἅν ἡμεῖς . . . ; v. 11, εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω, to be understood in the same sense as ii. 14, εἰ σὺ . . . ἔθνικῶς ζῆς.

⁵ v. 1, iv. 21.

⁶ iii. 7 fol., vi. 16.

⁷ vi. 12 fol., v. 3.

⁸ iv. 10.

⁹ iii. 2, 5.

¹⁰ v. 4, iii. 3 (ἐπιτελεῖσθε), iii. 8, 11; ii. 16, 21.

¹¹ iii. 10 fol., v. 3, 4.

The Law as the outward standard of morality had been superseded by the inward and transforming power of the heavenly Spirit, the νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.¹ Therefore any attempt to rehabilitate it after its destruction by the death of Christ on the Cross, must be branded as a denial of God, of Christ and of the Holy Ghost²; nay, Paul goes so far as to declare that the relapse of the community towards the ideals of Judaism was equivalent to a return to their former idolatry.³ Thus he unconsciously proclaims Christianity as a new religion, equally opposed to Judaism and to Greek Polytheism.

The object of the whole Epistle lies in this declaration; even the warnings of v. 13-vi. 10, although they do contain references to particular faults among the Galatian community, such as strife, arrogance and moral laxity, help to confirm the main thesis—that only the Gospel preached by Paul was from heaven.

3. The Epistle is addressed to the 'Churches of Galatia.'⁴ These communities, unlike those of Achaia, Macedonia and Asia, where larger towns were gradually singled out as capitals and naturally assumed a leading position, seem to have been distributed evenly over a strip of country, and to have grown up under like conditions, and remained so, till the time when the Epistle was written. The province of Galatia, a country for the most part of fruitful plough-land and pasture, lying in the centre of Asia Minor and shut off from the sea on all sides, had received its name from the hordes of Celts which, sweeping over from Europe in the third century B.C., had here found a permanent resting-place. Since then they had of course become civilised—that is to say, Hellenised—in every way; but though their old dislike to crowding together into cities may have lingered on, allusions to the relics of a Celtic *religion* in the passage beginning at iv. 9 could only be traced by the same morbid ingenuity that so eagerly advocates the Teutonic origin of the Galatians. Whether the few hundred Christians to whom this Epistle is addressed were descended from the conquerors of 280-240 B.C. or from later Greek and Oriental immigrants, it is

¹ v. 5, 18, 25, vi. 2.

² ii. 18-21, iii. 14, iv. 29.

³ iv. 8-11.

2, and see 1. Cor. xvi. 1.

impossible to say, nor, in the face of verse iii. 28, ought it to interest anyone. As for the part of Galatia in which to look for the oldest Christian communities, which certainly lay near together and were not very numerous, conjecture is equally futile; the western part seems to be indicated in the Acts.¹

For the last seventy years, however, an hypothesis has been very much in favour according to which the 'Galatia' of our Epistle should be taken in a wider sense to mean all the provinces placed, since the death of King Amyntas in B.C. 25, under the rule of a single Proprætor, especially Lycaonia and Pisidia. In that case the 'churches of Galatia' might consist of those named in the Acts² as having been founded on the so-called First Missionary Journey—the communities of Antiochia Pisidiæ, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. The wording of the Acts, however, is in the first place unfavourable to this theory; something apart from Pisidia and Lycaonia is to be understood in the term Galatia. But even if in official phraseology the name Galatia had included the districts of Pisidia and Lycaonia, and if Iconium or Derbe had been officially designated as Galatian towns, it would still be far from probable that in the course of seventy-five years the inhabitants of these towns should have grown accustomed to calling themselves Galatians. It is one thing to be incorporated into a powerful and haughty State like Bavaria; it is a very different matter to be attached to an administrative district like the New Galatia of the Romans. In addressing Pisidians and Lycaonians as 'O foolish Galatians' (iii. 1), Paul—whom, it is true, modern admirers credit with the rule of never employing an old local name unless it had become the name of a Roman province—would have been guilty of using as utterly inappropriate a phrase as would a speaker of to-day in apostrophising the citizens of Frankfort-on-the-Main as 'O wealthy men of Hesse Nassau.' Belief in the new hypothesis becomes most difficult when it appears, as with Zahn, combined with the old suppositions: namely, that the first visit of the Apostle only concerned the Southern

¹ xvi. 6.

² xiii. fol.

Galatians, though the second also included Galatia proper. Does it follow that communities which, like those of Derbe and Pessinus, lay more than 120 miles apart, had become blent within a few months in the same life and the same errors? However, the whole controversy is but of slender importance. Not even chronology has anything to gain by it; and if instead of 'Galatians' we say 'Christian communities in the interior of Asia Minor,' the dispute is at an end.

Paul was the founder of these Galatian communities; it was he who had first proclaimed the Gospel among them.¹ He had never intended at the time to preach to them, but illness had forced him to make a long sojourn in their country, and he remembers with emotion how lovingly and eagerly they had surrendered themselves to him. This alone is enough to differentiate the Galatian mission from that to Pisidia and Lycaonia; the flight of Barnabas and Paul to Lystra and Derbe is not precisely represented in the Acts as a convalescent trip after an attack of malaria. It is true that Barnabas, who took part in the Pisidian mission, seems from chap. ii. to have been well known to the Galatians, while Titus had yet to be introduced to them. But Cephas is also known to them, and of course the false apostles played off the authority of those two men—Barnabas and Cephas—against Paul; and this is the reason why Paul is so much concerned to establish his particular relation to them beyond all doubt. But he always declares that it was he alone who *first* preached the Gospel among them. The plural of i. 8 fol. (which, by the way, passes into the singular in i. 9) would probably not have been analysed by the Galatians into a series of individual components, which in verse 9 must needs be different from what they were in 8.

The great majority of the Christians of Galatia had formerly been heathens.² Elements of Jewish nationality were probably altogether lacking among them, for the passages brought forward to prove their existence³ must either establish the Jewish extraction of all or of none of the Galatians. The 'ye all' of iii. 26 and 28, might certainly stand in

¹ iv. 19, iii. 2 fol., i. 8, 9.

² iv. 8, v. 2 fol., vi. 12 fol.

³ iii. 2, 13 fol., 23 fol., iv. 3, 5, v. 1.

implied antithesis to the thought 'not merely the minority among you of Jewish birth.' But in both cases the emphasis lies, not on the πάντες, but on the predicate, that assures to every believer the present possession of salvation, or rather of the highest guarantees of salvation. The agitation of the Judaists had originated from outside, probably not without the support of the 'false brethren' of Jerusalem, in describing whom Paul had the heresy-mongers of Galatia in his mind. With the Holy Scriptures to support them—which Paul himself had taught his converts to revere as the Word of God—it was easy to convince the theologically untrained Galatians of the necessity of circumcision, especially when Paul and his friends had safely turned their backs upon the place. The date of the foundation of these communities cannot be established with any certainty from the Epistle itself, but according to Acts xvi. 6 it was during the great journey which eventually took the Apostle on to European soil—that is to say, about 52–3 A.D.

4. The question as to the date at which the Epistle was written is a more difficult one. Apparently Paul had already paid his readers two visits,¹ the second as well as the first in his capacity of preacher, i.e. in successful efforts to increase the number of believers, perhaps also of churches, in Galatia. The words of i. 6² give us the impression that these visits were not separated by any great interval of time, and that the latter especially had taken place quite recently. The aforementioned agitations probably only arose after the second, for the πάλιν, 'again,' of v. 3, would be more likely to refer to the thoughts expressed in chap. iii. (especially verse 10) than to any verbal declarations; and if by the προειρήκαμεν of i. 9 we do not, with Luther, understand verse 8, but other imprecations previously uttered, we may be led to suppose that Paul was forced to make use of such protestations—to which he is here merely lending additional force—at his first as well as every succeeding visit to any town. The excitement that runs through the whole Epistle, and the arguments Paul uses in it, are hardly compatible with the

¹ iv. 13.

² See also iv. 16, 18, 20.

assumption that he had observed traces of Judaistic influences among the Galatians in his recent visit, but had easily overcome them and cheerfully continued on his journey. It is more probable that the news of the defection of the Galatians took him completely by surprise, for it assuredly did not reach him through an official deputation from the churches, nor by a letter from them, to which he would certainly have referred, however briefly. He did immediately all that he could do from a distance to prevent the worst. If, then, the second visit is that mentioned in Acts xviii. 23, it must have occurred during the so-called third journey: that is to say, before Paul's stay of several years' duration in the province of Asia; and the Epistle must have been written during that stay itself, probably on one of the expeditions made from Ephesus for missionary purposes, since Paul makes no mention in it of any Christian community surrounding him. Only those of the brethren who were known to the Galatians are with him, probably the fellow-preachers who had accompanied him on his last visit thither. Hence it follows that any but the years 55-57 are excluded.

And indeed this assignment seems to me to be almost certain. The objection that Paul could have hurried in person to Galatia from Ephesus or its neighbourhood, if he found a voyage from Ephesus to Corinth so easy, does not hold; for Paul nowhere says that he was prevented from coming or suggests any reason against coming. Perhaps he had reason to think he would effect more by a letter than by a personal visit. It must be remembered that he could look back to unpleasant experiences with the Corinthian community (§ 7, 7). The gentle tone in which in 1. Cor. xvi. he mentions the orders he gave to the Galatians for a collection can only be explained on the assumption, either that he had set matters straight in Galatia by his Epistle, and had recently sent them paternal advice once more, or that 1. Cor. xvi. dates from before the Galatian catastrophe, and the orders in question were given somewhere during his second stay in Galatia. The latter possibility seems preferable, because we find no Galatian delegates mentioned either in Rom. xv. 26 or Acts xx. 4 (unless 'Gaius of Derbe' is to be considered a Galatian),

among the deputation which brings the Collection, and this cannot but reawaken our suspicion that the relations between Paul and the Galatians were at that time broken off—a thing which was indeed bound to occur unless the Galatians had immediately renounced their Judaistic perverters.

Under these circumstances, then, we are brought down to the second half of the stay at Ephesus. Moreover, we have not the slightest interest in referring this Epistle, which formulates more sharply than any other the anti-Jewish and anti-legal ideas of the Apostle, to the earliest practicable period in his life. The Epistle, though surpassed by others in wealth of thought, would on account of its clearness and decision deserve to be regarded as the last testament of the Apostle to his Gentile churches on his departure from them. But, in dating the Epistle as late as the period of captivity in Rome, the Fathers were only resting on the words of vi. 17, whereas Paul need not have waited till the time of his imprisonment to speak of 'the marks of the Lord Jesus' which he 'bears in his body' (cf. 2. Cor. xi. 23 fol.); still less, however, need we suppose that such words could only have been uttered in the first months after the sufferings he endured at Philippi in 52-3. Nor, finally, can any earlier date be accepted, such as the journey begun immediately after the meeting of the Apostles at Jerusalem in 52, for in the seventeen years of Paul's missionary work described in i. 15-24 there was no room for the foundation of the Galatian churches, and, however briefly he expresses himself in i. 21, he could not have omitted to mention his appearance in *Galatia*, if that had indeed taken place before the events of ii. 1. To gather from the words of ii. 5—'that the truth of the gospel might continue with you'—that this journey of Paul's to Jerusalem was necessitated precisely by the Judaistic agitation in Galatia, or that as soon as the Judaistic reaction arose Paul was alarmed for his Galatian children, is to overlook the fact that the Apostle's historical narrative¹ received all its colour from the immediate interest of the narrator in it;—instead of his adversaries in Jerusalem he now has before his eyes the

¹ Vv. 4 and 5 especially, and cf. ver. 10.

false brethren who had crept in privily beside him in Galatia: instead of those whom he had there protected, the threatened Galatians—a subtle piece of tactics, and how intelligible from the psychological side! He says ‘ye,’ where properly ‘we’ should stand, from the same tenderness of feeling as in iii. 26–29. It is true that he informs his readers of the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem as of something quite ‘new,’ but this does not prove that they had only just occurred, or that Paul had had no intercourse with his readers in the interval, for he wisely spoke of such things only in case of need, seeing how easily they might shake men’s confidence in the truth of his Gospel. Nor is there any meaning in ii. 10 unless Paul had had some opportunity of proving his zeal since the time of the Council. In short, even if the Galatians are the Christians of Lycaonia, the Epistle cannot have been written as early as twelve months after the Council of the Apostles. True that Zahn places it before 1. Thessalonians; but thanks to the immense apparatus of messages, corresponding plans, and missions to and fro which he constructs for us, he compels every calculating reader to postulate a longer interval than four to six months between the commencement of the European mission and the composition of our Epistle. Chronologically, Galatians is the third, perhaps the fourth, of the Epistles of Paul which have come down to us.

§ 7. *The Two Epistles to the Corinthians*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vols. v. and vi., by G. Heinrici (1896 and 1900), and Holtzmann’s ‘Hand-Commentar’ ii. 1., in which 1. and 2. Thess. and 1. and 2. Corinthians are taken by P. W. Schmiedel (1892).

For commentaries on both Epistles cf. G. Heinrici, 1880–87 (careful and independent). On 1. Cor., F. Godet, translated into German by K. Wunderlich, 1886–88 (containing delicate æsthetic and religious observation, but wanting in comprehension of the critical problems involved), and C. Holsten, in his ‘*Evangelium des Paulus*’ (v. *supra*, p. 68). On 2. Cor., A. Klöpffer, 1874. Also innumerable monographs, among which J. F. Rübiger’s ‘*Kritische Untersuchungen über den Inhalt der beiden Briefe des Apostels*

Paulus an die korinthische Gemeinde' (1886) is especially valuable for its clear statement of the disputed points.]

1. In order to understand Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians it is necessary to form an adequate idea of the state of the Corinthian community and of its relations to Paul, a task which is made possible by certain passages in the Acts¹ and by various allusions scattered through the Pauline Epistles. On his first journey to Europe—probably in the year 53—Paul, after passing through Macedonia and Athens, had arrived at Corinth, the capital of Achaia, a city which, standing as it did beside two seas, formed the connecting link between the commerce of the East and of the West. According to 2. i. 19—words which certainly have the appearance of a later gloss, though their substance is confirmed by 1. and 2. Thessalonians—Silvanus and Timothy had helped him in his preaching, but even if we do not follow Acts xviii. 5 in assigning a later date for their arrival, Paul might still consider himself² as the true father, founder and creator of the Corinthian church. It was by his means that the Gospel had first been brought to it,³ and this is borne out by the fact that the *firstfruits of Achaia*, the house of Stephanas⁴—which had deserved so well of the Corinthian Christians—were among the few members of the community⁵ baptised by Paul himself. 'In weakness and in fear'⁶ he had entered upon his work in this strange city, and his success was great beyond his expectations⁷; for from the very multiplicity of the factions that arose in the new community it is clear that it cannot have been a small one. It was composed for the most part of poor and uneducated folk, many of them, as might be expected, slaves⁸; yet, as the presence of individual members of good position may be inferred even from this passage, so the existence of considerable difference of social standing among the Corinthian Christians follows from xi. 20 fol. According to 1. xii. 2, they had formerly been idolaters. It does not actually follow from 1. vii. 18 that

¹ xviii. 1-18, 27 fol., xix. 1, xx. 2 fol.

² 1, iv. 15, iii. 6-10; 2, xii. 14.

³ 1, ix. 1, 2; 2, iii. 3.

⁴ ii. 3.

⁵ 1, xvi. 15.

⁶ 1, i. 4-7.

⁷ 1, i. 14-16.

⁸ 1, i. 26-29.

there was a small minority of Jews among them, but in itself this is quite probable. The Jewish couple, Aquila and Prisca,¹ belonged for a time to the community, and their labours for the new creed among the circle to which they had access are not likely to have been entirely unavailing.

In Acts xviii. 11, Paul is represented as having devoted more than a year and a half to the Corinthians, though probably with certain brief interruptions during which he sought to win converts to the new faith in other districts of Achaia.² Nevertheless the relations between them were not so intimate that he would have consented to accept support from them as he had from the Philippians: he maintained himself while at Corinth by his own labours,³ though he says⁴ that this reserve on his part was not due to any want of love, but to prudence, that all occasion for malevolent suspicion might be avoided. He had then departed for a considerable time, and in the interval a Jewish Christian from Alexandria, by name Apollos,⁵ had laboured for the Gospel at Corinth—not in antagonism to Paul, but probably in a more conspicuous manner,⁶ for we are told in 1. iii. 5–9 that the community had been increased through him. And notwithstanding iii. 10–15 Paul speaks of this ‘brother’ with great respect again in iv. 6 and xvi. 12, where we learn that he had left Corinth for Ephesus and had there met Paul, but had not yet, at the time when Paul wrote, allowed himself to be persuaded to resume his work among the Corinthians. Through him Paul had of course obtained more recent news of his old community over-sea, and this had again been supplemented a little later by the arrival of certain members of the house of Chloe,⁷ who seem to have removed from Corinth to Ephesus; but, besides this, three members of the community, Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, were at his side while he was writing the First Epistle,⁸ men who had apparently been deputed to bear a letter⁹ from the Corinthians to their Apostle, and who were probably charged at the same time with an urgent

¹ 1, xvi. 19.

² 1, iv. 12; ix. 6, 11–15, 18; 2, xi. 7–10.

³ Cf. Acts xviii. 24 fol.

⁷ 1, i. 11.

⁸ xvi. 17 fol.

¹ 1, i. 1; 2, i. 1, xi. 10.

⁴ 2, xi. 12.

⁵ Cf. 1, i. 17, iv. 10; 2, xi. 6.

⁹ vii. i.

invitation to Paul and Apollos to renew their visits to Corinth. But Paul may have heard much from other sources also as to the state of things at Corinth,¹ for the communication between that city and Ephesus was frequent and easy. And in vv. v. 9 and 11 of the First Epistle we hear, almost by chance, of an earlier letter, previous to 1. Corinthians, addressed to the community, in which Paul had forbidden them to 'keep company with fornicators'; but this warning had been misunderstood—perhaps by design—and taken as though Paul had meant fornicators among the Gentiles and thus made an absolutely impracticable demand. The letter seems to have been a short one, and was certainly not written without urgent need; but it has disappeared, together with the above-mentioned epistle from the Corinthians, in which perhaps that foolish misconstruction was pleaded as their defence.

2. Accordingly, we shall not have very far to seek for the causes which led Paul to write the so-called First Epistle to the Corinthians. He had been asked by the community for his pastoral advice on a series of questions of morality—doubtless as to where the Christian conscience, for instance, should draw the line in the matter of the relations between the sexes; how the Christian was to judge concerning the eating of meat sacrificed to idols (*εἰδωλόθυτα*), which had been sold in the market-place or set before him at a friend's table; and finally as to the signs by which the true presence of the Spirit might be recognised, and as to the best way of insuring that all 'spiritual gifts,' the utterances of religious enthusiasm, should be given due place and honour. Besides these, there may have been requests for information about Apollos and the matter of the Collection. Perhaps Paul was merely asked to give the messengers brief and verbal instructions on these points; but fortunately for us, Paul neither could nor would settle questions of so much importance with terse commands like those of 1. xvi. 1-4 and 12. He worked them out before the inquiring community, first in himself and then in the Epistle, with all his peculiar energy of religious thought and all the delicacy of his moral sense;

¹ 1. v. 1, xi. 18.

and, in spite of his world-contemning idealism and his attachment in principle to established custom, we may well admire his power of avoiding both extremes, and of distinguishing between matters of universal and eternal value and those of mere individual moment.

But he also gave his flock instructions—and commands—for which he had not been expressly solicited. As in *Thessalonica*—though in a different form—so in *Corinth*, doubts had been expressed as to the possibility of a resurrection from the dead; and in many points, survivals of the old heathen life, as yet unsubdued, were still manifest. For instance, the prosperous members of the community fared sumptuously at the common evening meal, while the needy went hungry; so little was the idea of brotherhood carried out in practice. They were not ashamed of carrying petty quarrels between members of the Church before a Gentile tribunal; and one man actually lived in incest with his stepmother, and had not yet been cast out by the Church. In other ways again their enthusiasm passed the bounds of decency; women wished to take an active part in the Church services, and appealed to the constraining force of that Spirit which had been bestowed also upon them, and even to the teaching of the Apostle himself—‘there is neither man nor woman, but all are one in Jesus Christ.’ They discarded the veil, which was intended to protect them from insult, at the religious festivals; and there was some danger lest certain gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking with tongues and prophecy, should be practised in mere levity by men of pushing ambition, to the detriment of true edification. And besides all this the *Corinthians* were full of self-satisfaction—of a vanity which thought it could dispense with all external guidance. This may have become evident to Paul from the community’s letter, even though we need not actually believe that it tried to call Paul to account, used a tone of disrespect, or was the work of one of his adversaries; but it showed itself at any rate with peculiar offensiveness in an impertinent criticism of all Christian authorities. Greek party-spirit had infected even the young community, and Paul knew of at least four competing cliques in *Corinth*, each with its particular

watchword—and in i. 12 he does not even pretend to give a complete list—; they were the partisans of Paul, of Apollos, of Peter and of Christ. At present, apparently, this party-spirit was mainly nourished by a love of singularity, for Paul had not heard of any serious religious differences among them; but deplorable results had not failed to ensue, as each faction could only assert its own superiority at the expense of the leaders of the others, and Paul himself had been subjected to criticism of the most hostile kind.¹ The party of Apollos probably boasted of their leader's cleverness and skill in argument, and no doubt it was in opposition to them that the Paulinists first arose; another small body again—probably composed of Jewish Christians lately arrived there, for it is surely a bold assumption to say that they consisted only of wandering Apostles from Palestine—insisted that if an Apostle must needs be their champion, it was Peter, the Pillar of the Church, who should be so regarded.

By the 'party of Christ' we should probably understand—taking Galatians into account—not the apostles of a state of independence unfettered by any traditions, but persons who, like the 'false brethren' or the emissaries of James mentioned in Galatians,² set their claims still higher, and, since Peter did not seem to them infallible enough, used Christ himself as their authority, acknowledging no other law than that which they had received from the Messiah in his own lifetime, or that which the glorified Messiah had revealed to them. Verse ix. 1 seems to be directed against the party of Peter, for Paul would not have insisted without reason upon the facts that he too was an Apostle, he too had seen the Lord Jesus; and xi. 1—'be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ'—may be aimed against the party of Christ. But, so far as Paul knew, it had not yet come to any actual attack upon the substance of his Gospel, and he looked upon the whole existence of these parties as stupidity rather than wickedness—an attitude which would indeed be most astonishing if he had already had bitter experience of the disturbance of his Galatian communities by these apostles of Peter or of Christ. He could still praise the community for 'keeping the ordinances

¹ i.-iv. and ix. 1-13.

² Gal. ii. 4, 12.

as I delivered them unto you.'¹ At present what troubled him most were the moral shortcomings which had arisen in consequence of this factiousness, and might give the enemies of the Gospel opportunity for exultation and scoffing. But he dreads a still more serious state of things; in iii. 17 he already speaks of a 'destroyer of the temple of God,' and it is surely not without reference to Corinth that in iii. 10-15 he dwells upon those who built with worthless materials—wood, hay and stubble—upon the foundation 'Jesus Christ.' This situation was grave enough in his eyes to induce him—since he could not immediately visit it in person²—to make an earnest appeal to the conscience of the community by letter.

3. Paul took no trouble to weave the various threads of his Epistle into an artistic whole, but availed himself of the freedom of style allowed in letter-writing, and probably from chaps. vii. to xvi. followed the order, broadly speaking, of the epistle from Corinth. After the address and greeting³ and the customary words of thanks,⁴ he takes up the subject of the mischievous party-spirit⁵ of the Corinthians in a tone of great excitement, which, however, gives place towards the end to words of fatherly exhortation; nor does the concluding verse—'What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of meekness?'—express any rekindling of his wrath. Then in chaps. v. and vi. he pronounces a sentence of excommunication upon the fornicators, and once more defines the attitude which it were fitting that a Christian community should take up with regard to fornication, in the midst of which he inserts an appeal⁶ to the Christian sense of honour against going to law before a heathen judge. In chap. vii. he answers the question touching the relations between the sexes, and then that of the difference between duty and expediency, as arising out of the problem of meat sacrificed to idols⁷; next he combats the innovating spirit of the women⁸; and finally the abuses at the celebrations of the Lord's Supper.⁹ The last two passages are closely connected with each other, as they both deal with offences against

¹ xi. 2.² iv. 18 fol.³ i. 1-3.⁴ i. 4-7.⁵ i. 10-iv. 21.⁶ vi. 1-11.⁷ viii.-xi. 1.⁸ xi. 2-16.⁹ xi. 17-34.

propriety at religious gatherings. The transition is easy to chaps. xii.-xiv., in which 'spiritual gifts' are judged according to a standard which the lofty utterance of chap. xiii.—a Canticle, as it were, in praise of love—expresses in so exalted a way. In chap. xv. he lays down and defends a part of his Gospel not generally understood at Corinth—the certainty of a resurrection from the dead, as the necessary consequence of the rising again of Jesus. Finally, in chap. xvi. there are directions as to the mode of gathering the collection for the poor; plans of travel; information as to the approaching visit of Timothy; all winding up with advice after the manner of 1. Thessalonians v.,¹ with greetings, and a conclusion from Paul's own hand.

Here it might be well to say that the idea of 1. Corinthians being a mere conglomerate of disjointed utterances upon the most various subjects should be absolutely rejected. The question of incest and fornication,² for instance, had been led up to by the emphasising of Paul's paternal right of chastisement: here was a case in which strict chastisement was a duty; in chap. vi., again, we have the discussion upon judging, because in v. 12 Paul had exhorted his readers to exercise judgment, while chap. vii. is also the natural development of the ethical problems touched upon in v. and vi.

4. Nothing can be gathered from the address as to the circumstances under which the Epistle was written. Paul's coadjutor in the task, Sosthenes, who can scarcely be identified with the 'ruler of the Synagogue' of Acts xviii. 17, is otherwise unknown to us; he must have been one of Paul's helpers, who possessed probably the same sort of authority with the Corinthians, and for the same reasons, as Timothy or Silvanus. The latter we do not find in Paul's vicinity after the period of activity in Corinth, and Timothy had already been sent by Paul to Corinth,³ probably before the letter from the Corinthians had reached its destination. He was to return, according to Paul's wish, straight to him from Corinth; but probably he had had other tasks to discharge as well, and had gone to Achaia by way of Macedonia, so that Paul's Epistle, though despatched later, may have arrived in Corinth earlier than he. It was entrusted, we may suppose

¹ Vv. 12, 13.² Chaps. v. and vi.³ iv. 17, xvi. 10 fol

to the three representatives of the community who had delivered the Corinthians' epistle into Paul's hands, and these would have performed both journeys by the shortest route, i.e. by sea. The Epistle was written from Ephesus,¹ where Paul was surrounded by a considerable staff of brethren,² including Apollos. He can send greetings from the Churches of Asia,³ and must therefore have been working in the district for some time⁴; while according to xv. 32, where he speaks of fighting with wild beasts, he had already experienced persecution at Ephesus; a few years also seem to have elapsed since his departure from Corinth,⁵ and there is nothing to indicate that since his foundation of the community Paul had paid it another visit—in fact verse ix. 18 almost excludes the possibility. And since he speaks of a possible wintering at Corinth,⁶ and intends to make the Jewish feast of Pentecost the latter limit of his stay in Ephesus, the Epistle must have been written in the spring. If we were quite sure that Paul kept to the plan of operations outlined in xvi. 1, 3 and 5, we should certainly be obliged to assign 1. Corinthians to the end of his sojourn at Ephesus, and in that case scarcely enough space would be left for Galatians between the despatch of 1. Corinthians and Paul's hasty departure. But Paul altered his plans of travel again and again—sometimes of his own accord and sometimes of necessity (as indeed in Ephesus itself, according to Acts xix. 10, not long afterwards)—and thus the arguments brought forward on p. 76 still hold good, and 1. Corinthians may be assigned with much probability to the year 56.

5. The other Epistle of Paul to the Corinthian community that we still possess—it is about two-thirds the length of the First, and even more clearly than the First includes within its scope the Christians scattered through Achaia—is the most problematical of all the Pauline Epistles. Its arrangement is in some respects exceedingly simple, in others all but inexplicable. The three main divisions, chapters i.–vii., viii.–ix., and x.–xiii., are marked off unmistakably from one another, even

¹ xvi. 8.² xvi. 19.³ Acts xviii. 18, and cf. 1. Cor. iv. 18.⁴ xvi. 20, and cf. Gal. i. 2.⁵ Cf. verse 9.⁶ xvi. 6.

by their tone. The smaller middle part deals entirely with the matter of the Collection. Here the Apostle seeks to stimulate the zeal of those he is addressing both with earnestness and love; but, though the matter is so dear to his own heart, he is not sure of its reception by the Corinthians, and hence arise the numerous repetitions and occasionally turgid sentences. The difficulty of making a clear translation of these chapters, in spite of their exceedingly simple subject-matter, is due to this condition of embarrassment under which they were penned. Then, however, with the abruptest change of front, Paul turns from chap. x. onwards to defending himself against certain persons at Corinth who had sought to vindicate their disobedience by the most malignant slander. Their accusations are set forth with a running commentary in chap. x.; in xi. 1-15 Paul proceeds to a vehement attack upon these deceitful false apostles, and further¹ draws a comparison remarkable for its bitter irony as well as for its moving pathos between his own promises and performance and theirs; however painful such boasting may be to him, he dare not injure his cause out of false modesty. Finally, he implores his readers in a somewhat quieter tone² to settle their most serious differences and complete the victory of truth before his approaching third visit to Corinth. The abruptness of the three concluding verses, xiii. 11-13, is especially remarkable when contrasted with their parallels in the First Epistle.³

In the first part, however (chaps. i.-vii.), which of course begins with address and greeting, Paul passes by an almost imperceptible transition from his thanksgiving to a description of his recent sad experiences and to a discussion of the differences subsisting between himself and the Corinthians. He first blesses God⁴ for the consolation—to which the Corinthians themselves had contributed by their sympathetic prayers on his behalf—granted him for the terrible experiences he had undergone in Asia. He had almost ceased to count upon their sympathy, and the fear of losing their hearts had tortured him more during those dark days than all his external calamities. How

¹ xi. 16-xii. 18.

² xii. 19-xiii. 10.

³ 1, xvi. 13-24.

⁴ i. 3-11.

deeply the confidence between the Apostle and the community had been shaken can be seen from vv. i. 11, 12, 17, where Paul defends himself against the charges of insincerity and untrustworthiness that had been brought against him. He had only given up his promised visit to Corinth, he declares, out of forbearance towards the community, and because the letter he wrote them in its stead had had the desired effect, since the community had corrected the man who had sinned against him. Now, however, after punishment, they were free to forgive him. He, Paul, had not been seeking his own honour in the whole affair, but had let himself be guided by his love for the Corinthians, which had driven him irresistibly towards them, even from his fruitful field of work in the Troad. Then, with true loftiness of tone, he continues his defence¹ against the charge of vain and conceited arrogance, in such a manner that the sublime truth and force of his gospel are set before the very eyes of his readers.² He declares himself the Apostle of the new covenant, the covenant of the Spirit, of freedom and of glory; he dwells upon the fact that all his trouble and weakness have only increased in him the certainty of eternal life and the longing for home, together with the overwhelming power of the Holy Spirit,³ and he insists that his labours have been solely devoted to the reconciliation of mankind with God, and the founding of a new creation.⁴ Upon this follows, by way of epilogue, an earnest exhortation to his readers to show forth this *newness* in their conduct—a newness having no further connection with the old life⁵—and finally a hearty expression of his restored confidence towards them; for the good news which Titus had brought with him of the repentance of the Corinthians had comforted his mind and confirmed him most joyfully in his ancient good opinion of their disposition.

2. Corinthians is, strictly speaking, the most personal of the extant Epistles of Paul. Apart from its business discussions it is entirely occupied with self-defence and controversy; but yet no other is richer in profound teaching as to the foundation, the aims and moral effects of his gospel; the

¹ From chapter iii. onwards.

² iii. 1-iv. 6.

³ iv. 7-v. 10.

⁴ v. 11-vi. 10.

⁵ vi. 11-vii. 1.

individuality of the Apostle shows itself here in its most many-sided form: in all its burning love, its bitter wrath, its considerate wisdom in the direction of earthly affairs, and its all-forgetting absorption in the mysteries of the other world. Above all, we are left with the impression that this man and his religion *are one*.

6. The circumstances under which the Epistle was composed appear at first sight to be easily ascertainable. Paul had been forced to leave Asia, i.e. Ephesus, under imminent danger of death, and had then turned his steps northwards, waiting awhile in Troas for the return of Titus, whom he had sent to Corinth, but finally going on to meet the latter in Macedonia.¹ Here he had happily fallen in with him and had received the most cheering reports of Corinth from his lips.² At the moment of writing he was gathering in the money collected in Macedonia—to which he hopes considerable additions may be made in Corinth³—and was intending to reach that city shortly, accompanied by certain Macedonian Christians,⁴ there to receive the sums his readers had collected. In order to encourage the energetic prosecution of this Collection he had sent a few trusted friends before him to Corinth, with Titus again at their head,⁵ and these had probably taken charge of his Epistle, which he had written in haste at their urgent request. He mentions his approaching visit again a little further on.⁶ His companion in writing the Epistle was Timothy, whom according to Acts xix. 22 he had sent into Macedonia before his own departure from Ephesus. All this agrees admirably with the situation described in Acts xx. 2; the Epistle was written a few weeks or months before Paul's last appearance in Corinth, whence, it will be remembered, he started on his circuitous⁷ journey to Jerusalem, gathering in contributions to the Collection on his way—the last journey that he was destined to undertake as a free man. 2. Corinthians must, then, be assigned to a date some nine months previous to his arrest: that is, in the autumn of the year 57.

¹ i. 8-10; ii. 12 fol.² vii. 5-7.³ viii. 6 fol.⁴ ix. 4.⁵ viii. 6, 16-24, ix. 3-5.⁶ xii. 14, 20. fol., xiii. 1 fol. and 10.⁷ Acts xx. 3 fol.

7. It is also easy to give a general answer to the question of the occasion or object of the Epistle. Paul had just received unequivocal proof from Titus that the majority of the Corinthian Christians recognised Paul's rank as an Apostle, and his right to be regarded by them as a father, and that they regretted all expressions to the contrary. Paul now assures them in the warmest way that his feelings were the same, and that he bore them a love which took thought only for their welfare. This alone would have been too much to entrust to a verbal message, but he was besides extremely anxious to stimulate the ardour of the Achaïans in the matter of the Collection, and, above all, he had to settle his account with that small body of implacable opponents who were still carrying on their agitations in Corinth. By refuting each of their charges separately he must prevent any repetition of a situation put an end to with so much difficulty, in which a community assumed the position of judge over its own Apostle, putting him as it were on trial.

But many difficulties present themselves as soon as we attempt to distinguish clearly the lines of connection between the First and Second Epistles, and to investigate more minutely what had actually passed between Paul and the Corinthian Church to make the explanations of the Second Epistle necessary. Nor is there anything else within the limits of our subject which has called forth so bewildering a variety of attempts at solution as have these questions. It is bad enough, to begin with, that it should be thought necessary or possible to solve them all. Two facts, however, are placed beyond all doubt: first, that the Second Epistle was written later than the First, for the party divisions treated in the First as relatively harmless appear from the Second to have well-nigh severed the bond between Paul and the Corinthians. It is true that we hear nothing more of the earlier party names, of the factions of Apollos, Peter, and Paul, but the opposition of the 'party of Christ,' supported from outside,¹ had proved to be all the more formidable; it was more dangerous even than the Judaistic movement in Galatia, for its leaders did not come forward with the special demands of Judaism,

¹ iii. 1, x. 12, 18, xi. 4.

but merely strove to drive the hated Paul out of Corinth by means of a campaign of slander. He was a braggart, it was said; he 'walked in the flesh'; he lacked the calling and power of an Apostle, and played the Evangelist out of greed.

The other fact is equally indisputable—that before this Epistle Paul had addressed yet another, of which we now hear for the first time, to the Corinthians.¹ This last had been written 'out of much anguish of heart with many tears' and with the object of calling forth the sorrow and repentance of his readers. He had demanded satisfaction in it for an insult offered him by an unnamed member of the community.² Subsequently he had become extremely uneasy as to the effect which his very imperious³ communication might have had upon its readers⁴; but at last Titus arrived with the news of a happy result⁵; the great majority of the Corinthians had punished the offender,⁶ and had declared their loyalty to Paul. With great joy he welcomes their surrender—which, by the way, according to vii. 7, they could hardly have expressed to him by letter—and now he asks them himself to pardon the wrong-doer and to consider the affair at an end. To identify this offender (*ἀδικήσας*)—who had not, as Paul insists, caused him personal sorrow⁷—with the incestuous person of 1. v. would be almost as monstrous, when we consider the mildness with which Paul treats him, as to identify the First Epistle, or even the epistle mentioned in 1. v. 9, with the stern letter described in the Second. There is nothing in the First Epistle which corresponds to what we must needs imagine as the contents of the letter 'written with many tears'; and it is impossible that Paul should suddenly have become uneasy, a year or two after, as to the effect which a letter written before 1. and answered by the community with perfect calmness before 1., might have had. I am unable to discover in 1. Corinthians this mighty wrath flashing out at all points, this forced calm which wrung tears from Paul's deeply sensitive nature, this most bitter pain; and if the First Epistle were written 'in heaviness,' what epithet must we apply to the Second, which, though written in joy, has its real outbreaks of fierce anger?

¹ ii. 3, 4, 9, vii. 7-12.² ii. 5, vii. 12.³ x. 9-11.⁴ ii. 13, vii. 5.⁵ Ch. vii.⁶ ii. 5 fol., vii. 11.⁷ ii. 5.

from Ephesus to Achaia, perhaps without warning; but he failed to strike the right note, had to put up with a personal insult from one of the members of the community, and very soon travelled back again, grieved to the heart, and, in the opinion of his opponents, completely driven off the field. He may have waited in vain for some time for some intimation of repentance on the part of his Corinthian children; later tidings were probably highly unsatisfactory, and he then wrote that third letter in which he sharply lashed the ingratitude, disobedience and immorality of the Corinthians and offered them a choice between submission¹ and a final rupture. The delicate task of conveying this letter and afterwards of bringing those to whom it was addressed into a responsive frame of mind, he entrusted to Titus, who was as yet unknown to the Corinthians.² The results of this man's judicious and energetic proceedings³ were that the *greater part* of the community⁴ complied with Paul's demands—which are unknown to us in detail—and repelled the calumnies of the 'followers of Christ,' while Titus could even successfully introduce the matter of the Collection without further delay.⁵

Of course he did not accomplish all this in a day, and his stay in Corinth was prolonged beyond his expectation. When he had started on his journey Paul was still at Ephesus, but was intending to depart shortly and to go through the Troad to Macedonia; his route having been arranged so accurately with Titus beforehand that the latter could not fail to meet the Apostle at some point on his return from Corinth. The earlier plans announced by Paul in i. 15, however, according to which he thought of going from Asia through Corinth to Macedonia and from there back again to Corinth, cannot in this case have been communicated to the Corinthians by Titus or by the intermediate epistle, for that epistle had probably served as a substitute for the first of these two visits; and we know that complaints of the Apostle's vacillation had already been made to Titus.⁶ Paul had rather promised something of this kind to the Corinthians

¹ 2, ii. 9, x. 6.² 2, vii. 14.³ vii. 15.⁴ ii. 5 fol.⁵ viii. 6.⁶ i. 13, 15 fol.

during his second visit, or through some intermediate channel at the time of it. That he had formed exactly the same plans in the First Epistle¹ as we may gather from the Second² that he actually carried out at last is a mere coincidence: he was forced by the stress of circumstances to revert to the original plan of 1. xvi. in spite of a more recently arranged modification intended especially for the advantage of Corinth. This modification was of *later* date than 1. xvi., for according to 2. ii. 1 Paul would have kept to it had not his determination not to visit Corinth *again* in heaviness, but to wait for her submission, obliged him to make a direct journey to Macedonia. The most probable hypothesis is that in bidding farewell to his friends after his prematurely curtailed second visit he had promised them compensation in the form of two visits at a later time. And we know also from Acts xx. 3, that Paul was again unable to perform the Collection journey to Jerusalem direct from Corinth by sea, as he had desired, but that he first travelled northwards once more to Macedonia and then along the eastern side of the Ægean Sea southwards to Palestine.

If we consider the multitude of events which would thus have taken place between 1. and 2. Corinthians, we must divide the two Epistles from one another by about a year and a half, and if 1. was written in the spring of 56, 2. must be assigned to the autumn of 57, and so on; for only thus would there be time for the intermediate visit and letter and the long interval of waiting. It is true that Paul could not in this case have left Ephesus at Pentecost in the *same* year in which he wrote the words of 1. xvi. 8, but must have extended his activity there for another twelve months; but this is attested by his own words in 2. viii. 10 and ix. 2, where we hear that the Corinthians had shown goodwill towards the matter of the Collection since the previous year (*ἀπὸ πέρυσι*). But the starting-point of their goodwill, in spite of the agreement between viii. 10 and viii. 6 (*προεῖναι*) could not have been the appearance of Titus, but the zeal of the Corinthians for the Collection attested in or aroused by the words of 1. xvi. 1.

¹ xvi. 5 fol.² 2, i. 23, ii. 1, 12 fol., ix. 5.

8. Just as the Church could not admit that at least one Epistle of Paul's to Corinth and another addressed to him thence had disappeared—and therefore attempted to make up for them by a forged correspondence, which, arising out of the 'Acts of Paul,' was preserved both in Latin and Armenian and enjoyed full recognition in the Armenian Bible for 1000 years—so modern criticism thinks itself bound to discover considerable portions at least of the lost epistles to the Corinthians within the limits of the canonical pair. The most recent critics have set themselves to this productive task with amazing energy, contending, for instance, that relics of the earliest Corinthian Epistle are to be found in several passages scattered through what is now the First,¹ and, naturally, this has not been accomplished without once more attacking the genuineness of individual sentences. An hypothesis which assumes that the passage vi. 14 to vii. 1 of the Second Epistle is such a relic has indeed gained the approval of a much wider circle. Here the admission that there are at any rate no grounds for regarding these verses as non-Pauline is satisfactory; a few ἅπαξ λεγόμενα of the sort contained in the paragraph—ἐτεροζυγεῖν, Βελλάρ, μετοχή, συμφώνησις, συγκατάθεσις, μολυσμός—are of no importance, especially in an epistle so rich in peculiarities as 2. Corinthians, while the use of σάρξ in the sense of 'the outer man' in vii. 1 has good parallels elsewhere.² Nor are the tone and ideas by any means un-Pauline. On the other hand, it will not be denied that the context would not suffer by the rejection of these verses; vii. 2 would follow excellently upon vi. 13, and the rejected passage would be perfectly appropriate in a letter such as that described in 1. v. 9-13. But what is most convenient is not necessarily right; it is not *impossible* that vi. 14 fol. should follow upon vi. 12 and 13 any more than that vii. 2 fol. should follow upon vii. 1. The entreaty to break with unbelief and all its works is fully prepared for, for instance,

¹ E.g., iii. 10-23, vii. 17-24, ix. 1-x. 22, x. 25-30, xii. 20 fol., xiv. 33^b-36, xv. 1-55 and 57 fol.

² iii. 3, iv. 10-12, v. 16; Gal. iv. 13; and compare especially the 'relief for our spirit' of 2, ii. 13 and the 'relief of our flesh' of 2, vii. 5.

by v. 10 and vi. 1 and 2, and the somewhat violent transition to this fundamental moral demand may be psychologically explained by the Apostle's anxiety lest in this letter, occupied as it was with assurances of friendship, self-justification and efforts for the Collection, the most important point—the edification of a community little accustomed as yet to 'walking in the Spirit,' but rather in need of a strict discipline—should not be sufficiently emphasised.

Almost more misleading than this suggestion about 2. vi. 14 and the following verses is the so-called hypothesis of the Four Chapter Epistle, which was first put forward by A. Hausrath. According to this theory, chaps. x.–xiii. are to be severed from chaps. i.–ix. in the form of a separate epistle, and are to represent that intermediate letter mentioned in chaps. ii. and vii.; it can scarcely be disputed, indeed, that chaps. i.–ix. as well as x.–xiii. could each constitute a complete epistle in themselves—except that the ending of the one (and might not ix. 15 perhaps be sufficient ending?) and the address of the other had been struck out—and the vehemence and sharpness with which Paul attacks his readers after the conciliatory explanations of i.–vii. and the friendly requests of viii. and ix. are certainly startling. Nor does he confine himself by any means to dealing with the agitators, the 'Christ' party; he appears indignant with the disobedience of the community, which he distinguishes clearly from the 'few' against whom a life and death struggle must be waged¹; he fears that it will let itself be perverted²; he takes note of its want of firmness towards the calumniators³; he is even prepared for an unsatisfactory reception of his *apologia*.⁴ Nor does he expect to find the community in anything but an unsatisfactory state,⁵ and this corresponds ill with the self-congratulatory tone of chaps. i. and vii. The Corinthians seem to have demanded a proof that Christ was speaking by him,⁶ and to have formally assumed towards him the position of Judge.⁷ Such a letter might well be said to have been

¹ x. 2, 6, 7, 12, etc.² xi. 3.³ xi. 20.⁴ xii. 19.⁵ xii. 20.⁶ xiii. 3.⁷ xiii. 5.

relations between Paul and the Corinthian Church become a psychologically insoluble riddle, if Paul had not only abandoned the plans of chaps. viii. and ix. yet again, but had also paid a visit to Corinth after the reconciliation effected by Titus, solely in order to leave an impression of weakness behind him, to threaten measures of punishment at his next coming, and to have insults flung in his face. Thus by his ill-judged appearance he would have completely ruined a delicate matter which had been running quite smoothly; and this again would be hardly consistent with the note of confidence struck in various places¹ throughout these chapters.

We should do well, then, to accept these four chapters, on the evidence of tradition, as written contemporaneously with 2. Cor. i.-ix., for they can neither be of earlier nor of later date, nor could anyone but Paul have written them. To us, indeed, some things in them seem strange; the rapid change in tone and attitude strikes us as astonishing: but then we have a far more imperfect knowledge of the situation of the writer than the earliest readers of the Epistle, by whom alone Paul desired to be understood.

In any case, Paul would certainly not have dictated so long a letter all at once; and often a change of tone or an imperfect connection may be explained by that alone. It is possible, even, that there may have been an interval of some length between the beginning and the completion of the letter, that it was interrupted by the hasty despatch of Titus, and that after the departure of this gentle mediator resentment obtained the ascendancy in Paul's mind. Nor, perhaps, had even Titus had nothing but good news to report, and it is possible that Paul had but just received tidings from another source of new and base attacks upon him by the 'men of Christ.' But indeed we have no need for such explanatory hypotheses. Paul had probably intended from the outset to deal in succession with the three subjects which now filled his mind whenever he thought of Corinth—first with the positive and then with the negative. In the first place it would certainly be expedient to give a gracious answer to the repentant advances of the community—wisdom and love both

¹ x. 2, 5, 6, xi. 1 fol., xii. 20 fol., xiii. 10-12.

pointed to such a course. But not only do the digressions of chaps. ii.-vi. prove how much Paul thought his readers still in need of deeper instruction and more careful guidance; it is distinctly stated here, and not only in chaps. x.-xiii., that but a *partial* result had as yet been attained, and that the community was far from having purged itself of all distrust of its Apostle. There are a large number of passages¹ which reveal definite grievances and anxieties on Paul's part with regard to the Corinthians; and even in the matter of the Collection he is obliged to approach them with great caution and formality, whereas with the Macedonians restraint rather than encouragement had been needed. And since he was writing to the whole community and not to the submissive majority only,² since he desired to find all clear on his arrival, and not to be hindered in his pastoral labours by disputes with the lying apostles, at whose door lay all the strife, or with their thoughtless followers, he must and would express his attitude towards these rebellious persons and their doctrines finally and in writing. And who will wonder that a man of Paul's stamp should again have struck a harsher note than before towards the whole community, as he recalled how easily the Corinthians had suffered themselves to be imposed upon concerning him—with what inconsistency, shallowness and at the same time arrogance they had behaved?

But, however bitterly he writes in these passages, it had not been his intention to do so; his admonition was to have been given in 'meekness and gentleness,'³ since he was already certain of the complete rout of his antagonists.⁴ It is, however, only at the end⁵ that he recovers once more the tranquillity which he had not always been able to maintain in his argument with such adversaries. For our part, we may perhaps think that he would have done better to place the controversial part at the beginning of his letter, and to have left his readers with the final impression that wherever there was any desire to make peace with him, he on his side

¹ E.g., i. 12 fol. (ver. 14, ἀπὸ μέρους), i. 23 fol., ii. 5, 9, 17, iii. 1, 5, iv. 2, 5, 7 fol., v. 11 fol. 20, vi. 1, 3, 4-13, vii. 2 fol., viii. 22, ix. 3.

² ii. 6.

³ x. 1.

⁴ x. 2-6.

⁵ xiii. 6-13.

was ready to give any proof of his hearty willingness to forgive and to trust again. But he had good reason for his procedure. Chaps. i.-ix. seem to have been written in Timothy's name as well as his own, while chaps. x.-xiii. were meant to be understood as spoken by himself alone. The *αὐτὸς δὲ ἐγὼ Παῦλος* of x. 1, does not stand in contradistinction to the long-forgotten 'brethren' of ix. 3 and 5, but introduces a personal explanation on Paul's part—probably written, like Galatians, with his own hand—in which, as though between man and man, he lays the bare truth before the faithful portion of the Corinthian community, demonstrating both to them and to us what was and had been the question at issue between himself and them. They were to feel that the only course which remained to them was, either to lose their Apostolic father or else to come to a definite breach with these Judaistic disturbers of the peace. Chaps. i.-ix. proclaim the conclusion of a truce in the matter of the offender, and chaps. x.-xiii. lay down the conditions of a lasting peace. The situation that confronts us in x.-xiii. is none other than that of i.-ix., but in the two divisions the same circumstances are regarded from entirely different points of view. And that they did require such two-sided illumination is just what we should expect from the nature of such a situation. Paul seems to have judged it aright, for soon after the completion of this Epistle he stayed at Corinth for three months, and—to judge from a work most probably composed during his stay there, the Epistle to the Romans—not by any means in a disturbed or gloomy state of mind.

§ 8. *The Epistle to the Romans*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. iv., by B. Weiss, 1899; Hand-Commentar ii. 2 (Gal. Rom. Phil. by R. A. Lipsius, 1892); 'Internat. Critical Commentary,' by W. Sanday and A. Headlam, 1900; the special commentaries of E. Böhmer (1886) and of G. Volkmar (1875), both differing widely from the traditional form of exegesis; of F. Godet, translated into German by Wunderlich (1890, see p. 78) and of A. Schlatter (1894, see p. 68). Also E. Grafe's 'Über Veranlassung und Zweck des Römerbriefes' (1881), a lucid investigation of the introductory questions and review of the criticism hitherto

devoted to it, and W. Mangold's 'Der Römerbrief und seine geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen,' a vigorous defence of Baur's theory of the Jewish-Christian character of the Roman community; H. Lucht: 'Über die beiden letzten Capitel d. Römerbriefs,' 1871 (an acute defence of Baur's theses touching chs. xv. and xvi. 25-27, and of the relative authenticity of xvi. 1-23). E. Riggenbach, 'Die Adresse des XVI Cap. des Römerbriefs' and 'Die Textgesch. der Doxologie Rm. xvi. 25-27' in 'Neues Jahrbuch für deutsche Theologie,' 1892, 498-605, and cf. *ibid.* 1894, 350 ff. (a learned defence of its authenticity and integral connection with Romans).]

1. Apart from the introduction and conclusion, our Epistle falls clearly into two divisions—chaps. i.-xi. being argumentative, and chaps. xii.-xv. hortative. The first part—which might be termed an exposition of Paul's Gospel—is again divided between chaps. viii. and ix.; in the first half Paul defends his faith against the religious errors of Judaism, and in the second (ix.-xi.), against nationalist objections of the Jews. A lengthy composition, it is free from all signs of excitement, and is written with much care; and though, nevertheless, the writer's warmth of feeling again and again finds striking expression, the chain of thought is not thereby interrupted—and in any case Paul could not have described the way to righteousness and life in the style of a catechism. It is well known how highly Luther valued this Epistle, and indeed it is the most important foundation for the study of Paul's Christianity, although for the history of his times it is not quite so valuable.

The address,¹ with its unusually full description of the writer's qualifications, is followed by a thanksgiving, combined with an explanation of the motives which led Paul to open direct communication with his readers. He hopes before long to preach the Gospel to them also, and in i. 16 fol. lays down the principle that the Gospel is *the revelation of the righteousness of God, and that for such revelation Faith is the Alpha and Omega*. He then illustrates this thesis first negatively² and then positively.³ (a) Negatively: before faith existed, and without faith now, there neither was nor is

¹ i. 1-7.

² i. 18-iii. 20.

³ iii. 21-viii. 39.

true righteousness—neither in the Pagan¹ nor the Jewish² world, which, certain though it was that God in his unalterable fidelity would some day fulfil the promises vouchsafed to Israel, could never attain to freedom from sin and punishment through the Law, but only to a knowledge of sin—(b) Positively: through the expiatory death of Jesus Christ, God, without relaxing aught of his justice, had established remission of sins and bestowed the gift of perfect righteousness on Gentiles as well as Jews, on the sole condition of *faith*.³ But this assertion was no contradiction of the Law. On the contrary, it was confirmed by the Law⁴ in the story of Abraham.⁵ Neither was it contradicted by our own experience, for no afflictions could rob us of the feeling of reconciliation, of peace with God and of hope in his glory.⁶ This alone made it possible to understand the ways of God in history; as sin and death had extended to all mankind from the one Adam, and were not conquered, but only accentuated, by the Law, so by the one Jesus Christ righteousness and life were now conveyed to all. A new epoch in the world's history had opened, an epoch directly opposed to the last, and consequently having nothing, not even the Law, in common with it.⁷ Faith did not even require the Law as a supplement, for men were no longer to be in bondage to sin; the believer had died to sin by the act of baptism⁸; sanctification was the fundamental condition of eternal life.⁹ The Law had now no further claim upon us, since Christ's death had released us from it.¹⁰

That the Law was good and divine, however, was not in any way to be denied; only, sold unto sin as we were by the flesh, in spite of the joy of the inward man in the Law of God, as in all else that was good, the Law had no power beyond that of showing us the full extent of our impotence and need.¹¹ But now a new day had dawned; whoever was in Christ had passed the period of the flesh and the Law; he walked in the Spirit as a child of God, released from all bondage and fear and in the

¹ i. 18-32.² ii. 1-iii. 20.³ iii. 21-30.⁴ iii. 31-iv. 25.⁵ Gen. xv. 6.⁶ v. 1-11.⁷ v. 12-21.⁸ vi. 1-14.⁹ vi. 15-23.¹⁰ vii. 1-6.¹¹ vii. 7-25.

presence of an infinite felicity, in which the rest of creation should come to share.¹

Paul then introduces his discussion of the nationalist objections of the Jews by admitting the fact that Israel, the chosen people, had held aloof from Christ.² But the promise of God had only been given to the spiritual Israel,³ and God's mercy might choose out the true children of Abraham freely wherever it would.⁴ Every potter has a right over his clay, to make out of it vessels unto honour or unto dishonour, as he wills. Nor ought the carnal Israel to complain that it did not form part of this chosen body, for in spite of all its zeal for the Law it had obstinately pursued the phantom of self-righteousness, and refused to listen to the clearest exhortations of the Scriptures to faith in Jesus Christ.⁵ To want of understanding was added active disobedience. But, thank God, not all the Israelites were hardened: a remnant there was which had been chosen out.⁶ And even the temporary casting out of the great majority of them had an educational purpose: Israel, or all that was left of it, would be saved at last, after all the Gentiles, and the broken branches of the olive-tree would be grafted in again.⁷

Then, with a skilful change of argument, the Apostle introduces his exhortation with the wish that his readers, having freed themselves from the old delusions, should render reasonable service to God—the service of the ‘good, the acceptable, and the perfect.’⁸ This idea is then illustrated by a number of short general precepts concerning true Christian behaviour both within the community and towards the world at large.⁹ Special stress is laid on the duty of subjection to ‘the higher powers,’¹⁰ after which everything is summed up in the commandment ‘Love thy neighbour as thyself,’¹¹ and the imminence of the Last Day dwelt upon as a motive for ‘walking honestly.’¹² Then from xiv. 1 to xv. 13, he gives his advice upon a difficulty peculiar to the Roman community, showing that brotherly love would

¹ viii. 1–39.

² ix. 14–29.

³ xi. 11–36.

⁴ xiii. 1–7.

⁵ ix. 1–5.

⁶ ix. 30–x. 21.

⁷ xii. 1 and 2.

⁸ xiii. 8–10.

⁹ ix. 6–13.

¹⁰ xi. 1–10.

¹¹ xii. 3–21.

¹² 11–14.

spuriousness as long as the spuriousness of the Epistle to the Ephesians is not placed beyond question.

Whoever does so venture, however, is by no means obliged to treat the remaining part of the two chapters in the same way. Verse xiv. 23 being an extremely awkward ending for a letter, it is in itself more likely that the shorter version of the Epistle, if it ever existed, should represent a mutilation—although hardly one caused by design—than that the longer should have arisen through the additions of a later hand. The salutations of xvi. 3–16 and 21–23 contain nothing that savours of fabrication; it is impossible to believe seriously that an Andronicus and a Junias should still in the second century have been reckoned among the *Apostles*,¹ whereas this would have been quite in keeping with Pauline usage. The fact that they were Christians before him is accentuated by Paul as an additional motive for respecting them. But how improbable this from the pen of a later writer! Nor, above all, can anyone have had the smallest object in ascribing the recommendation of Phœbe to Paul. Vv. xvi. 17–20 are certainly very surprising in their present place, but otherwise they bear the Pauline stamp both in form and matter. The best analogies for the abruptness of the condemnation are to be found in 2. Cor. x. fol. and in Philippians iii., while Romans vi. 17 affords a parallel for the application of the word ‘doctrine’ to the Gospel. In ver. 20 the end of the world is evidently expected in the immediate future.² As to chap. xv., in the first place it follows admirably upon xiv. as far as verse 13; ‘the strong’ and ‘the weak’ of xv. refer to precisely the same persons as before, and the ‘circumcision’ and the ‘Gentiles’³ are only brought in to illustrate the principle that in ‘receiving’ each other, they, both the strong and the weak, were only following the example set them by Christ. And that Christ should in ver. 8 be called the ‘minister of the circumcision’ is not contrary to Paul’s usage, but merely the recognition of an historical fact. Nor, in the second place, do vv. 14–33 show us a fictitious Paul, half submitting to the Jewish Christians; he surrenders none of his rights,⁴ but

¹ xvi. 7.

² Cf. Lk. xviii. 8.

³ Ver. 7 fol.

⁴ Vv. 16–20.

on the contrary refers to certain odious principles of his Judaistic adversaries,¹ and the modesty of his tone towards the Romans² arises from the fact that he could not there come forward, as in Corinth, as their 'father' and 'founder.' In ver. 16 he makes use of a metaphor from sacrificial worship, but to discover in the expressions necessary to it anything pointing to clericalism, to a heightened idea of the priestly character of the Church official, would mean a very perverted interpretation. The personal messages are all of them best suited to the situation in which Paul then was; how could a later writer have thought of making him plan a journey to Spain, and even ask something of God which was not granted him,³ or of putting a doubt into his mouth as to the reception of his collection-money at Jerusalem? Not a sentence of chap. xv. can be attributed to a forger, and the language is as characteristically Pauline as that of xvi. or vii.

4. But even if everything in the Epistle down to xvi. 27 can be referred to Paul, it may yet not have formed part of the original Epistle to the Romans. Since 1829 the theory brought forward by David Schulz (in Breslau) that Rom. xvi. belonged to an epistle of Paul to the Ephesians has gained almost universal acceptance. The champions of this theory are, however, disagreed as to whether chap. xvi. represents a mere fragment of an epistle to the Ephesians, or one that is practically complete, whether it should begin at ver. 1 or only at ver. 3, and whether vv. 17-20 and 21-23 belong to it. It has even been proposed to assign chaps. ix.-xi. or xii.-xiv. to this Ephesian Epistle.

It is in any case improbable that Paul should have had so many intimate acquaintances in Rome as he appears from vv. 3-16 to have had among his readers. The names themselves tell us nothing—those in Latin afford no proof in favour of their owners' Western extraction, those in Greek none against it. But is it in Rome that we are to look for Epenetus,⁴ 'the first fruits of Asia,' and for Prisca and Aquila,⁵ who according to 1. Corinthians⁶ were living in Ephesus? We should have to presuppose a sort of general migration of

¹ Ver. 20.² Ver. 15.³ Ver. 31.⁴ Ver. 5.⁵ Vv. 3 fol.⁶ xvi. 19; and cf. 2. Tim. iv. 19.

Paul's Eastern communities to Rome in order to render conceivable the presence there of so many of the Apostle's friends. And Rufus¹ would seem to have taken his mother with him, and Nereus² his sister. Then are we to suppose that Priscilla and Aquila had immediately been able to found a home for a Jewish community at Rome³ similar to that which they had collected at Ephesus⁴? The stress laid on the obligation of all *Gentile* churches to them in xvi. 4 seems indeed to fit Rom. xv. 24 and 27 very well, but the expression, which occurs nowhere else in Paul's writings, was chosen with delicate tact in order to accentuate their merit more sharply, since they were of Jewish extraction. Everything in this passage points to Ephesus, none of it to Rome. In writing to the strong Roman community Paul would certainly not have emphasized his own personal connections with those he was greeting, as he often,⁵ and on the same grounds I should also be inclined to ascribe vv. 1 and 2 to the Ephesian letter. Phœbe's services to Paul personally were scarcely adapted to impress the Romans; but the question as to whether it were more likely for a woman of Cenchreæ to migrate to Ephesus than to Rome does not seem to me to be worth much argument. These two verses furnish us with a motive for the epistle—the address has of course disappeared, but probably nothing else. Paul grants Phœbe's request for a letter of recommendation to a place where his recommendation justly carried weight, and makes use of the opportunity to greet his old friends and to add a short but earnest warning to his readers⁶ against the disturbers of peace, the agitators with their flattering words. That such men would not neglect Ephesus when they worked so successfully at Corinth, is self-evident, especially since Paul had been obliged to fly from that city. But there was no need for a systematic attack, since Paul was still at the head of his community, nor would there have been room for one in so short a letter. Even its tone here diverges remarkably from that of the Epistle to the Romans—ver. 19, for instance, with its 'your obedience,' 'I would have you,' does not appear in the latter at all: and the place would be singularly inappropriate.

¹ Ver. 13.² Ver. 15.³ Ver. 5.⁴ 1. Cor. xvi. 1.⁵ Vv. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 13.⁶ Vv. 17-20.

priate for so important an exhortation. The chief objection, however, lies in xvi. 17-20, for the other reasons are only of the 'more or less probable' rank. If Paul wrote these words to the Romans it would be necessary to construct a very different view of the community from that which is based on chapters i.-xv. Simply for prudential reasons Paul would never have written so sharply to a community with which he was unacquainted; had he, then, entirely forgotten the intermediate *τολμηρότερον ἔγραψα* of xv. 15?

Vv. xvi. 1-20 can therefore be described with tolerable certainty as they stand, as a miniature epistle of Paul to the Ephesians. On the other hand, vv. 21-23 would suit an epistle to Rome just as well as one to Ephesus. The Epistle to the Romans has indeed an amply sufficient ending in verse xv. 33, but greetings like those of xvi. 21-23 may yet very well have followed it, and it even sounds as though Paul were now for the first time introducing the senders of these greetings to his readers, to whom they were personally unknown. And in an epistle to the Ephesians everyone would expect these three verses to come before ver. 16 rather than after ver. 20. But if we consider vv. 21-23 as the original ending of Romans, the short Ephesian epistle would then have been *inserted* into it, and that is a much more doubtful hypothesis than that of its being *added* to it. That this addition took place very early is easily conceivable if both Epistles were written at the same time, and perhaps by the hand of the same scribe (*i.e.* the Corinthian Tertius¹). At any rate, we should definitely place the letter of recommendation during Paul's last sojourn at Corinth because of vv. xvi. 1, and ver. 7 is no objection, for Paul had had 'fellow-prisoners' not only at Rome and Cæsarea, but also before,² and the two here named had probably shared his imprisonment on the same occasion as that on which Aquila and Prisca had risked their necks for his life. Nor need it surprise us that six or eight months after the event Paul still had it vividly before his eyes. Again, there is no necessity to suppose that this epistle was the first that he had addressed to his Ephesian community since that sorrowful departure, so that we need

¹ xvi. 22.

² Cf. 2. Cor. xi. 23.

not expect a passage of lamentation over those experiences or thanksgiving for his deliverance. These expressions had found utterance before, since Paul had some feeling for his community—but they have disappeared.

5. Having now determined the compass of the Epistle to the Romans, we may hope to form a clearer idea as to its object. In spite of the violent opposition of modern authorities, we must unhesitatingly assert that this, like the rest of Paul's Epistles, was written to, that is to say *for*, a single community—in this case that of Rome—and that it was intended for this one community and was meant to produce an effect upon it alone; not that it was an outline of Pauline faith and teaching for the world at large, accidentally clothed in the epistolary form which its author found so natural, and dedicated by a clever act of courtesy to the important community of the world's capital. What Paul expresses in i. 11 as his long-cherished wish in making this approaching visit to Rome—namely, to impart some spiritual gift to the Roman Christians 'to the end they might be established'—is also his object in the Epistle. It is thus that he begins to carry out a duty towards them that he had often keenly felt.¹ He had acquainted himself with the internal affairs of the Roman community, and knew of the friction between the 'strong' and the 'weak,'² and in spite of the phrases 'let us not therefore judge one another,' 'let us follow after things which make for peace,'³ it is not a section of his ethical system that he is here treating of, but a defect peculiar to the Roman community that he is striving to eliminate by 'some spiritual gift.'⁴ Nor is it by chance that in an epistle to the Romans the exhortation to a loyal bearing towards the 'higher powers'⁵ should have been so earnest and so comprehensive, and even though we may not be able to prove in the rest of the Epistle that Paul's apologetic and parænetic arguments were aimed especially at the Christians of Rome, yet in many passages of other Epistles proof of this sort is equally impossible. But the animation of the tone, the passages scattered through it beginning 'brethren,' 'beloved.'

¹ i. 14 fol.² xiv. fol.³ xiv. 13 and 19; cf. xv. 1 and 2.⁴ xiv. 13, κρίνατε; 16, ὑμῶν τὸ ἀγαθόν κ.τ.λ.; xv. 5, 6, 7.⁵ xiii. 1-7.

show that Paul had definite readers in his mind, and that he was not speaking in monologue. Nevertheless it is not to be understood by this that he possessed a clear and complete idea of the situation of the Roman Christians; naturally not more than occasional items of news would have reached his ears. Nor is it worth while to warn my readers against the childish pedantry of assuming that every word in such a work of doctrine as this, which explains many of the fundamental problems of religion in so thorough and systematic a way, was directed to the needs of Roman hearers alone; on the contrary, we must here test the writer's apparent allusions to the position and opinions of his readers with even greater care than in the case of the Epistles addressed to communities with which Paul was familiar.

In any case Paul cannot have been ignorant of the elements of which the Christian community of Rome was composed, and this, then, we in our turn shall learn from the Epistle. Since its first effort is to remove the objections against Paul's Law-freed Gospel, it has been concluded in the face of the manifest proofs to the contrary that the community addressed was entirely or mainly Jewish-Christian, and biassed with the prejudices of Judaism. Paul speaks of his readers in i. 5 fol. and xi. 13 simply as Gentiles, and vv. i. 13-15 would have no meaning if the Christians of Rome consisted of Jews by birth, neither would xv. 14-16. The tone of feeling in which he announces his approaching journey to Jerusalem with the proceeds of the Collection¹ does not sound to me like a bid for the sympathy of the Romans, whose attention is to be drawn thereby to the piety of Paul's attitude towards the primitive community of the Holy Land, but rather like a preparatory announcement of similar collections to be made in Rome. Otherwise there would be something unfitting in the twofold emphasis laid in xv. 27 upon the *debt* to the saints in Jerusalem which the Gentile Christians were bound to discharge. Again, it is scarcely possible that Paul would have written vv. vi. 16-21 to circumcised Christians. The Jew is only *addressed* in passages of animated contention against Judaistic doctrine,² otherwise, especially in

¹ iv. 25-28.² ii. 17.

chaps. ix.-xi., the Israelites are spoken of in the third person, while phrases such as 'Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh'¹ and various others² may be explained in the same way, or, like 1. Cor. x. 1, by the fact that Paul was treating the facts and ideas of his own inward experience as common Christian property.

Naturally it is not to be supposed that any of the larger communities of Paul's time were without some Jewish admixture, least of all that of Rome, which had arisen without any help from the Apostle of the Gentiles. And this is why Paul felt his position towards it so uncertain. It was an unknown quantity to him—a Gentile community indeed, and therefore belonging to his sphere of work, but not founded either by him or by any of his companions, and therefore³ outside his jurisdiction. The legend of its foundation by Peter has been abandoned, but nevertheless it must have been from Jerusalem that the Gospel was brought to Rome, although not by means of special emissaries, but through the silent channels of trade between the Holy Land and the Jewish community of the world's capital. The first Christians of Rome are therefore sure to have been Jews, and in the strife between those who rejected Jesus and those who thought him the Messiah,—which led to the well-known Edict of the Emperor Claudius '*Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*'⁴—it was probably with the latter that proselytes sided more abundantly. These again won further converts to the new religion among Gentile circles, and it was precisely this Imperial edict expelling the Jews from Rome, which, besides bringing about a strong preponderance of the Gentile Christian element in the Messianic community—for solely because of his faith in the Messiah no Jew could escape the doom of banishment—probably resulted also in the final separation there between Jews and Christians, because this was to the interest of both.

Now, it would have been quite possible for Gentile Christians to have imposed upon themselves the observance of the entire Mosaic Law, as the Galatians had been prepared to do,

¹ iv. 1.

² iv. 12, ix. 10, iii. 9, vii. 5 and 6.

³ Rom. xv. 20.

⁴ Cf. Acts xviii. 2.

and the Christians of Rome might have combined an extraction mainly Gentile with a disposition entirely or mainly Jewish. Nevertheless, the 'strong' of chap. xiv. fol., who confessedly form the majority, hold a faith which allows them to eat everything, and not meat alone, without distinction,¹ and which observes no particular day, such as the Sabbath, more than any other²; hence they had placed themselves in a position of greater freedom towards the Law than any Proselytes, and constituted a Gentile Christian community emancipated from the Law and growing wild, so to speak, independently of Paul and certainly without his profound justifications for such an attitude. We must not even assert that the minority of 'weak' brethren represented a Judaistic party. For they shrank altogether from eating meat and from drinking wine, a fact which points to the ascetic scrupulosity which was so common a feature of the times, rather than to Pharisaic strictness. At any rate, Paul did not look upon the weak brethren as representatives of that Judaism which declared the works of the Law necessary to salvation, for in that case he could not without compromising himself have met them so far as he does in xiv. 21 fol.; he treats them rather as Christians who, having begun their progress towards a complete freedom of belief, had attained to all but the highest step.

But what, then, could have led the Apostle, who in chap. xiv. fol. warns his readers in the name of brotherly love against an exaggeration of the sense of freedom, to defend himself as far as chap. xi. of the same Epistle almost exclusively against a condemnation of his gospel which is only conceivable as coming from Jewish quarters? Must we not assign chaps. xii. fol. to a different epistle from chaps. i.-xi., since in the recipients of the two sections exactly opposite errors or faults seem to be pre-supposed? Can the 'judges' of chap. ii. be identified with those of chap. xiv.? Or was the community addressed in i.-xi. really independent of the Law, while Paul was merely strengthening it against possible Judaistic attacks, by laying before it a careful exposition of the whole state of the case? Yet if on his migra-

¹ xiv. 2.

² xiv. 5.

with greater skill. This Epistle probably fulfilled its task better than any of his others, for here the whole man is revealed to us. In chaps. i.-iv. we have the Rabbinical schoolman, in viii. and xi. the inspired poet, in xiii. and xiv. the sober, careful director of conduct, and in ix. the bold thinker who follows out to its logical conclusion the argument which makes all things begin and end in God. The Romans would not be able to disregard such a man or to lock their hearts against him, unless they had previously determined to make no terms with him whatever. A small knot of irreconcilables may even yet have remained, but the community proper looked up to Paul as their Apostle from the moment this Epistle reached them.

§ 9. *The Epistle to the Philippians.*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vols. viii. and ix., 4: *Philippians* by E. Haupt (1897), together with *Colossians*, *Philemon* and *Ephesians* and an Introduction of 104 pages entitled 'Die Gefangenschaftsbrieve neu bearbeitet.' In the 'Hand-Commentar,' *Galatians*, *Romans* and *Philippians* are undertaken by R. A. Lipsius (vol. ii., 2, 1892). See also the 'International Critical Commentary,' by M. Vincent (1897). For special commentaries see B. Weiss (1859), J. B. Lightfoot (1896), and A. Klöpper (1893); also C. Holsten's investigation in the 'Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie' (1875 and 1876), in which he sides with those who dispute the authenticity.]

1. The Epistle to the Philippians is written with unusual warmth, in a tone almost of familiarity, and with a certain lack of form. In it Paul opens his heart freely, and hence his subjects and moods are variable. But the writer who, even with this simplicity, has such marvellous power to exalt and edify becomes only the more dear to us; his tenderness is never shown more abundantly than in the way in which he speaks of the gift bestowed on him by the Philippians, nowhere is his 'spiritual gift' of treating even the small events of common intercourse in a lofty way, and of illuminating them with his religious idealism, more brilliantly manifested.

After the address and greeting¹ and the thanksgiving and prayer for the community,² he informs his readers as to the state of his own affairs and as to his experiences and prospects.³ To this⁴ he skilfully appends the exhortation: by looking on Jesus as the example of lowliness and self-sacrifice, nay even as a personal joy and glory to himself, they are to put an end to the factiousness of their common life. Next he announces the approaching visit of Timothy and the return of the faithful Epaphroditus, lately recovered from a serious illness,⁵ and with the charge, 'Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord,'⁶ takes up his exhortation once more.⁷ In the first place we have an urgent appeal to his readers to seek their progress only along the path in which they now stand,⁸ and above all things not to renounce their high spiritual possessions—righteousness through faith, perfection, knowledge—for the sake of the pitiful glory of a carnal circumcision and of a supposed righteousness through the Law. Then follow⁹ certain special exhortations to individual members of the community, viz. to two women who, though they had laboured zealously for the Gospel, had recently fallen out one with another. In iv. 4 and again in iv. 8 Paul rouses himself to bid a particularly warm and vigorous farewell, but returns again in vv. 10–20 to express his grateful joy in the Philippians' gift, which, he declares, was precious to him, not for its assistance in his own need, but as the fruit of their faith. Greetings and salutations end the Epistle.¹⁰

2. At Philippi, an inland town in eastern Macedonia, Paul had preached at the time he first set foot on the soil of Europe; there he had been shamefully ill-treated and finally driven from the town,¹¹ but he had left behind him a community so faithfully attached that when he was at Thessalonica it had twice already sent him voluntary help, and afterwards did so yet again.¹² Since he never accepted money

¹ i. 1 fol.² i. 3–11.³ i. 12–26.⁴ i. 27–ii. 18.⁵ ii. 19–30.⁶ iii. 1.⁷ iii. 1–iv. 9.⁸ iii. 16.⁹ iv. 2 fol.¹⁰ iv. 21–23.¹¹ 1 Thess. ii. 2.¹² Philipp. iv. 15 fol.; 2 Cor. xi. 8 and 9.

from other communities, the relations he had had with the Philippians since the 'beginning of the gospel'¹ (these words being spoken, of course, from *their* point of view) had always been unique. For some time after this they had had no further opportunity of proving their zeal for their beloved Apostle, but the relations between them had not grown cold.² Now³ the Philippians had sent a gift to Paul through Epaphroditus, a member of their community, and had strictly charged the latter to stay and render personal service to the Apostle.⁴ Their messenger had, however, become dangerously ill, and was besides tormented with home-sickness, so that Paul considered it his duty to send him back as soon as he was recovered. But whether the Philippians, who had heard of his illness,⁵ had made inquiries after him by letter is just as impossible to determine as the question whether their 'gift of love' was accompanied by a joint epistle or not. Paul makes no reference whatever to any epistle of theirs. He had enough reason for writing to them without this; he must provide Epaphroditus, who had, after all, only half fulfilled his mission, with a letter of excuse; he must express his thanks for their gift, give them the desired information as to the state of his suit, report to them as to his present condition and his prospects, and since he had heard of their earnest longing for another visit at all events promise them an equivalent—the approaching visit of Timothy. That he would not do this without adding to it 'some spiritual gift' for their encouragement needs no explanation; some of their faults he may have heard of through Epaphroditus, and others he may have contended against more than once already; at any rate he knows how to discharge this duty as well as the others in paternal spirit.

The question as to whether the community consisted of Gentile or Jewish Christians need concern us little, however probable the former may be, even from iii. 3 fol. In any case it adhered implicitly to Paul,⁶ and the divisions that existed in it were mainly founded on personal vanities and

¹ iv. 15.² iv. 1, i. 8.³ iv. 14 and 18.⁴ ii. 30.⁵ ii. 26.⁶ ii. 12, iii. 17.

jealousies. Even at Philippi, however, everything was not perfect¹; but the 'dogs, the evil workers, the concision,' against whom Paul breaks out so fiercely in iii. 2, were certainly not members of the community, but agitators from outside, new-made Proselytes, who sought to advance the cause of Moses amid the religious ferment of such societies. This exhortation is not sufficient evidence from which to conclude that the Philippians were inclined towards Judaizing. If Paul means by those 'who mind earthly things, whose god is the belly,' of iii. 18 fol., the same persons as those he attacks in iii. 2—and the 'enemies of the Cross of Christ' could scarcely have been degenerate though professing *Christians*—then we must conclude that he had already warned the Philippians of the 'evil workers' etc., and they are either to be found not far removed from the 'adversaries' of i. 28 (that is, in a powerful Jewish community at Philippi, intent upon suppressing its Christian rival), or else we must assume that a Judaistic agitation pure and simple—like that in Galatia—was still going on in the East, and that Paul looked upon it as on a level with unbelieving Judaism itself, if not even below it. In either case no more is implied as to the attitude of the Philippians towards matters of faith than that the Apostle, already inclined as he was to look on the dark side of things, did not credit all members of the community with so mature a knowledge as to be proof against every argument that these agitators could bring forward. Paul knew how lovingly the community clung to him, and that his word had absolute authority over it; as long as he lived, indeed, it would not fall; but what if he were now to be called away? For this contingency, then, the faithful of Philippi shall possess a testament from him which leaves nothing to be desired in point of clearness. If seducers press upon them, they shall know—even though Paul himself can no longer be asked for counsel—what *his* opinion of their tempters' religion and morals had been, so that even if their judgment waver, piety towards himself may keep them in the right way.

¹ iii. 15, 16; ii. 12.

3. Paul was a prisoner when he wrote the Epistle,¹ and moreover the words 'prætorian guard'² and 'they that are of Cæsar's household'³ point decidedly towards the *Roman* imprisonment. His expectation, too, of a speedy termination to his suit⁴ would fit Rome better than Cæsarea, and still more would the fact that he was once more directing his thoughts, in the event of his being set at liberty, towards a journey to his old communities,⁵ whereas from Cæsarea he must have turned them towards Rome. From i. 14 it appears that he was surrounded by a considerable Christian community, from which he can send greetings to Philippi.⁶ As a prisoner he could not, of course, have had direct relations with this whole body, but he had special friends among his guards, and even his older fellow-workers had not, according to ii. 20 fol., all forsaken him. He complains,⁷ however, of a minority who preached Christ out of evil motives of envy and strife—his imprisonment having naturally left the field open to them. He does not expressly say that these *τινές* belonged to his immediate vicinity, but if their intention really was to 'raise up affliction' for him 'in his bonds' by their proceedings, we should certainly look for them in Rome. What they preached was not a *false* gospel, so that they must have disclosed their possible Judaistic leanings still more cautiously than had Paul's Corinthian adversaries, and the Roman community, on which Paul was in no position to press the true wine, and with which he was not on terms of personal intimacy, entertained no suspicions against them. It seems probable under these circumstances that the Epistle should be placed between the years 61 and 63, but of these 61 is the least likely, since we must allow time for three events: the Philippians hear of the arrival of Paul in Rome, they send a gift to him there, and the bearer of it falls ill and recovers again. More than this, however, I should not venture to assert, for the expressions of longing for death⁸ are certainly conceivable from Paul's lips before the last months of his life, while the complaint of ii. 20 fol. against all his *entourage*,

¹ i. 7, 13 fol. and 17.² i. 13.³ iv. 22.⁴ ii. 23.⁵ ii. 24, i. 25-27.⁶ iv. 22^a.⁷ i. 15 and 17.⁸ i. 20 fol.

with the exception of Timothy, might have given place to a more cheerful verdict, supposing, for instance, that these companions had been replaced by others; we need not necessarily regard it as the result of years of observation and disappointed hope. And the 'all' of ii. 21 is clearly hyperbolic. Paul was human, after all, and had a right to give utterance in his epistles even to passing moods and feelings.

4. This should never be lost sight of in dealing with the attempts of some critics to apply the pruning-knife to our Epistle. The theory of the Tübingen school, that the whole Epistle is post-Pauline, is indeed almost universally abandoned, for the language corresponds exactly with that of the recognised Epistles, while the tone is Pauline beyond the possibility of imitation.¹ Any difficulties arising from the doctrines of Christology and Soteriology of ii. 6-11 and iii. 6-11—which are held to represent in the first case an exaggeration and in the second a relaxation of the Pauline conception—are set at rest when we apply an unprejudiced exegesis to the passages in question, in the light of our knowledge that Paul did not make use of fixed dogmatic formulæ, but of religious experiences which could admit of very various expression and the content of which was ever growing wider. The special mention of the bishops and deacons in the address² was probably owing to the fact that they had managed and carried out the Collection on Paul's behalf, while the mere existence of such Church officials is not more suspicious than that of the men 'who are over you' of 1. Thessalonians.³ More remarkable certainly is the fact that the anti-Pauline evangelists are here judged so mildly that Paul can actually say of their doings 'Christ is proclaimed,'⁴ and can therefore rejoice in them still, whereas in the Epistle to the Galatians he had cursed them. But is not the same idea expressed in 2. Corinthians xi. 4, only in different words, and may not personal experience have convinced the Apostle that a large number of his opponents did actually help to spread the Gospel by their preaching? Did Paul's enemies consist only of bigoted Judaists?

Under these circumstances other critics have only pointed

¹ i. 20 fol., iv. 10 fol.

² i. 1.

³ v. 12.

⁴ i. 15-18.

neighbourhood,¹ so that we must look for the head of the family, Philemon, at Colossæ too. It is true that Paul had never been to this town and yet seems to have won over Philemon to Christ, but a man so well-to-do would have travelled—at least as much as a Chloë² or a Phœbe³—and nothing would have been more natural than that he should have met Paul more than once on such occasions—e.g. at Ephesus.

At the time of writing the Epistle Paul was in captivity,⁴ but was not hindered from doing fruitful work.⁵ This alone might speak for Rome as against Cæsarea, but the impression is further strengthened by the hope expressed by Paul in ver. 22 that he would soon be able to claim Philemon's hospitality.⁶ In no case would the discrepancy between the plans of travel in Philippians ii. 24 and Philemon 22 (if it exists at all) compel us to consider Rome in the former case and Cæsarea here as the starting-points of the proposed journeys—as though Paul were bound to cling fast to ideas so casually hinted at (for they are really nothing more) for a period of perhaps a year. Nor need we rack our brains to decide whether a slave escaping from Colossæ would be more likely to betake himself to Rome, with all its hiding-places, or to Cæsarea, where no one would suspect his presence; for his meeting with Paul must in any case have been the work of chance. Since Timothy, as well as certain other brethren, is here staying with Paul, as in Philippians,⁷ the Epistle should be assigned to some date near the Epistle to the Philippians, but whether a trifle earlier or later is not to be determined. At any rate, the cheerful temper of the present Epistle—which in ver. 19 allows the writer to speak in harmless jest—is not necessarily earlier than the melancholy thoughts of Philippians. The Tübingen school have pronounced the Epistle to be non-Pauline; they consider that the supposed later author was aiming at a settlement of the slavery question through the lips of Paul, and that the state of things implied in the Epistle is a little too romantic to be true. But the whole of the Apostle's life was romantic in this sense, and

¹ Col. iv. 17.² 1 Cor. i. 11.³ Rom. xvi. 1.⁴ Vv. 1 and 13.⁵ Ver. 10.⁶ See p. 122.⁷ Philip. i. 1, i. 14 and 16-18.

a settlement of the slavery question, which one almost expects, is precisely what the writer does not attempt; he keeps himself throughout to the one case before him, and does not even there give any quite unequivocal decision. As far as form and contents are concerned, there is nothing in Philemon unfavourable to the theory of its authenticity, and it is probable that no one would have questioned it, had not the Epistle been injured by its close connection with Colossians and Ephesians, whose Pauline authorship it was thought necessary to deny. But how could a forger have put unfulfilled hopes¹ into the mouth of the Apostle? And what a masterpiece of imitation would the whole Epistle present, notably vv. 15-20! The pedantic doubts of later theologians as to the canonical nature and the inspiration of Philemon, of which we hear through Jerome, Chrysostom and Theodorus Mopsuestenus, are anything rather than the relics of primitive tradition; on the contrary, the external evidence rather confirms the witness borne by every sentence in the Epistle, that Philemon belongs to the least doubtful part of the Apostle's work.

§ 11. *The Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians*

Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vols. viii. and ix. 2, 3, in which Col., Ephes. and Philem. are undertaken by E. Haupt (1897); Hand-Commentar, vol. iii. 1; Col. Ephes. Philem. and the Pastorals by H. von Soden (1893); 'Internat. Critical Commentary' (1897); Col. and Ephes. by T. K. Abbot. Also the special commentaries of J. B. Lightfoot, 1886 (for Colossians and Philemon see p. 44); of H. Oltramare (in French, published at Geneva, 1891 and 1892) on Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon (the latter a very conservative although in parts extremely careful exegesis), and of A. Klöpper, Colossians (1882) and Ephesians (1891). The critical questions are stated with the greatest accuracy and independently discussed in H. J. Holtzmann's 'Kritik der Epheser- und Kolosserbriefe' (1872)].

The connection between these two Epistles is so close that they must be treated together. Even a passing glance at their contents will be sufficient to show this, although by no means fully.

¹ Ver. 22.

1. Colossians begins with address and greeting. The next verses contain a thanksgiving for the conversion of the Colossians, accomplished by Epaphras, and a wish for the continual improvement of their standing in the kingdom of Christ, the mention of whose name immediately calls forth a Christological digression¹ upon the majesty of the Son, who is the source of all blessings and transcends all greatness. Then² Paul defines his own task within this kingdom—to proclaim its universality—and tells his readers that he labours and struggles especially for their advancement.³ After this preparation he assails them with entreaties not to let themselves be bewildered again by teachers who deluded them with a show of false perfection by setting all manner of misleading human wisdom in the place of the one Christ, and who by the stress they laid on the worship of angels and certain special ascetic and ritual observances drew them away from Christ, their head.⁴ How to serve him is now described in the practical part of the Epistle⁵—the Colossians must be raised above all earthly things and ‘the old man with his doings,’ they must put on the spirit of Christ in love and peace and in joyful thanksgiving to God the Father.⁶ Paul now proceeds to specify more minutely the duties of man and woman, of child and father, of servant and master⁷—it is the Christian’s domestic code—and then, returning to the broader tone, he urges them all once more to steadfast prayer—not forgetting the work to which he himself had been called—and bids them win the unconverted through their conduct and by a right use of the Word.⁸ Then come personal matters, the commendation of the bearers, greetings and commands, and finally the farewell written with his own hand.⁹

2. Not less clearly does Ephesians fall into two parts of equal bulk, the one theoretical and the other practical. After the address and blessing of vv. 1 and 2 there follows a very lengthy thanksgiving,¹⁰ the first part of which¹¹ consists

¹ Vv. 14–23.² ii. 4–23.³ iii. 18–iv. 1.¹⁰ i. 3–23.⁴ i. 24–29.⁵ Chap. iii. fol.⁶ iv. 2–6.¹¹ Vv. 3–14.⁷ ii. 1–3.⁸ iii. 1–17.⁹ iv. 7–18.

in a general extolling of God for having chosen us from the beginning of his own free will, while the second ¹—for which verse 12 is a preparation—is concerned more particularly with the readers, for whom the writer declares he gives thanks and offers prayers continually, because they had found the way to Christ, the universal Lord and head of their Church. From death by sin we had been transported to the heavenly world of the risen Christ—a transformation accomplished by Grace alone, without any act of ours ²—and the fatal barrier between the heathen ‘under the flesh,’ to whom the Ephesians once belonged, and the people of promise, was now done away by the blood of Christ.³ After the destruction of those ordinances which stirred up enmity and created the gulf between ‘you that were far off’ and ‘them that were nigh,’ the holy temple had been rebuilt upon a new foundation, and all who had obtained access to God through the one Spirit were made use of in equal measure as stones in the building thereof.⁴ The glory of proclaiming this secret of the joint inheritance of the Gentiles had been granted to him, Paul, the prisoner of the Lord,⁵ and he therefore prayed that they, far from losing heart at his bonds, would become ever more perfect in faith, love and knowledge. With the doxology of iii. 20 the writer returns to the point from which he started ⁶; in reality the whole of this first part of the Epistle is merely an unusually elaborate parallel to the thanksgivings with which Paul always loved to preface his Epistles—a solemn contemplation of the majesty which, through Christ, had given mankind the Gospel of atonement, of re-creation and of peace.

The exhortation now begins ⁷ with an injunction to the readers to give practical proof of the restored unity of the Spirit in all lowliness, steadfastness and love, and to root out every trace of the old heathen life.⁸ Paul then proceeds to warn them more particularly against falsehood, wrath, stealing, corrupt speech and an unforgiving heart,⁹ and in the next two verses holds up God and the love of Christ as the models

¹ Vv. 15 fol.

² ii. 14–22.

³ iv. 1–16.

⁴ ii. 1–10.

⁵ iii. 1–12.

⁶ iv. 17–24.

⁷ ii. 11–13.

⁸ i. 3 fol.

⁹ iv. 25–32.

after which his readers were to strive. Then come so further moral precepts in the same strain as those of chap. iv. once more the contrast is vividly brought out between what was and what is, between unclean and clean, darkness and light, foolish and wise. This is followed by a domestic counsel touching upon the various classes in the same order as that of Colossians iii. 18, and then, in a boldly drawn picture of the putting on of the spiritual armour,³ the Apostle spurs his readers to battle against the powers of evil both of the natural and the supernatural worlds, and urges them to make supplication on his behalf, seeing how eagerly he longed to be free once more to take part in such a fight. After a word of commendation for the bearer, Tychicus,⁴ the Epistle ends with a benediction.

3. If we assume that both Epistles are authentic there can be no doubt as to the date of their composition. Paul is a prisoner,⁵ and he sends the Epistles by the hand of Tychicus whose station and business are described in both Epistles in almost identical terms. This alone would be enough to prove their nearly simultaneous composition. That Timothy is named in Ephesians, as he is in Colossians,⁷ as joint writer of the Epistle, is no greater discrepancy than that the last chapter of Ephesians differs from Colossians⁸ in not containing any special greetings; we are not to conclude from it that Paul was in different circumstances, but only that different relations subsisted between him and his addressees. Colossians again, is intimately connected through Onesimus with the Epistle to Philemon, for Onesimus was to arrive at Colossae in company with Tychicus⁹ and would certainly have been charged with the latter document; in both, Paul and Timothy are the joint authors, and in both Paul sends greetings from Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke. Jesus Justus is the only person mentioned in Colossians¹⁰ who does not appear in Philemon, but this is probably only because he was personally unknown to the readers of the latter; while to Paul's 'fellow-prisoners,' his friends may very likely have

¹ v. 3-21.² v. 22-vi. 9.³ vi. 10-20.⁴ vi. 21 fol.⁵ Col. iv. 3 and 18; Eph. iii. 1 and vi. 19 fol.⁶ Col. iv. 7 fol.; Eph. vi. 21 fol.⁷ i. 1.⁸ iv. 10 fol.⁹ iv. 9.¹⁰ iv. 11.

relieved each other in that capacity, so that the different application of the title in the two Epistles¹ need not surprise us. As to the relation between these three Epistles and Philippians it is best not to dogmatise; but the mournful tone of the latter might easily have given place to the more cheerful mood of Colossians and Philemon, especially as in Philippians itself it does not last throughout the Epistle.² And in Col. iv. 11 there is certainly a slight echo of the bitter tone of Philip. ii. 20 fol. At any rate, we must assign a common date to Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians, and in all probability Paul wrote them at Rome in the year 62 or 63. Some time in the sixties the country round the Lycus, where Colossæ lies, was visited by a terrible earthquake, and if Paul had known of this he would probably have mentioned it in the Epistle to the Colossians; but there is so much uncertainty about the date of this earthquake that we cannot derive any help from it towards the chronology of our Epistles.

4. The town of Colossæ lay in South-West Phrygia, in the fertile valley of the Lycus, quite close to two larger cities, Laodicea and Hierapolis, whose Christian communities, it seems, carried on an active intercourse and exchange of communications with that of Colossæ.³ Probably they all arose in the same way⁴ and followed similar lines of development. They did not belong to the churches founded by Paul himself, even though a few individual members might have received their faith from him,⁵ for according to ii. 1 Paul had never seen Colossæ. Their founder seems to have been a Colossian named Epaphras,⁶ probably a disciple of Paul, but at any rate one who proclaimed the gospel there in Paul's own manner.⁷ How long these communities had already existed is not to be determined from the Epistle, and we possess no other evidence. But since their founder was a Gentile Christian⁸ we may consider the communities also to have been such, and passages like i. 21 and 27 and especially ii. 13 confirm this view. Some time before, this said Epaphras had come to

¹ Col. iv. 10; Philem. 23.

² Col. iv. 13 and 15 fol., ii. 1.

³ Philem. 19.

⁴ i. 4, 7 fol., ii. 5 fol.

⁵ See p. 123.

⁶ Col. iv. 13.

⁷ Col. i. 7, iv. 12.

⁸ iv. 11 and 12.

Rome from Colossæ to visit Paul, and had been able, in the name of the community, to give proof of its sympathy with the Apostle and to deliver a report¹ of the state of affairs there which was on the whole extremely satisfactory. It was natural, therefore—if only because the Colossians were now deprived of their valued leader—that when an opportunity arose, such as was afforded by the sending back of Onesimus (while Tychicus, too, was instructed to pass through Colossæ), Paul should thank them for their love and self-sacrifice, should assure them of the warm love he bore them in return and should urge them to continue along the path of righteousness. Part of the Epistle would thus be quite adequately accounted for. There was, however, something besides this which the Apostle of the Gentiles seems to have considered himself in duty bound to impress upon the Colossians with the whole weight of his authority. False brethren had appeared in the community, and there was some danger lest when left to itself it should gradually fall into the power of these men. Whether Epaphras had already striven against them, but without success, or whether they had not made their appearance until after his departure, so that the news of their proceedings had reached him—and through him Paul—but recently, we do not learn. At any rate, to unmask these apparently harmless innovators, to proclaim them dangerous seducers, and to shield his own gospel against such corruption were among the principal objects of the Epistle.

5. In the picture of these 'false brethren' of Colossæ the mingling of different features is very remarkable. The emphasis with which Paul impresses upon his readers that *they* were 'circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands,'² the stress which he lays upon faith and baptism,³ the declaration especially that the 'bond which was against us'—i.e. the Commandments—had been nailed to the Cross and therefore done away with,⁴ and the warning against the distinctions made in foods and days—feast-days, new moons and Sabbaths⁵—all recall the Judaistic agitators with whom we are best acquainted through the Epistle to the Galatians. And

¹ ii. 5.² ii. 11.³ ii. 12.⁴ ii. 14.⁵ ii. 16.

their transferring the position due to Christ to the 'rudiments of the world'¹ reminds us directly of Galatians iv. 3 and 9. But their love of classifying both meat *and drink*,² and their ascetic tendencies and anxieties³ do not exhibit the manners of strict Pharisaism, but rather the fundamental qualities of a mystical form of piety such as that of the 'weak' of Romans xiv. The reproach that they had sought to mislead the Colossians by the tradition or the doctrines of *men*⁴—which cannot be explained in this context by Mark vii. 8—and by 'philosophy and vain deceit'⁵ takes us still further away from Judaism. Paul would not have called the service of the Law 'will-worship' (ἐθελοθρησκία),⁶ but a more exact definition of this may be found in ii. 18, where besides hypocrisy or artificial humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη), he warns his readers against the worship of angels (θρησκία τῶν ἀγγέλων) which some had attempted to impose upon them by appeals to fictitious revelations.

The Apostle himself was not attacked by these false brethren. It is true that he repeatedly emphasises his deserts⁷ and his right of ministry in the Gospel,⁸ but one is left with the impression that he did not intend thereby to ward off attacks from outside so much as to strengthen the belief of his readers positively in his own right and power to instruct them. The innovators of Colossæ had not branded the faith held till then by the community as a *false* but as an *incomplete* Christianity; they belonged to the class which according to 1. Cor. iii. 12 sought to build up hay and stubble upon the unchanging foundation of the faith; they flattered themselves that they had reached a higher stage of Christian knowledge, and offered to initiate others also into the perfect worship and into the secret depths of wisdom. The phrases used by the Apostle are directed against this from the very beginning: cf. i. 6, ἐπέγνωτε ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, ver. 9, ἐπίγνωσιν ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ συνέσει πνευματικῇ, ver. 10, τῇ ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ, ver. 27, γνωρίσαι τί τὸ

¹ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, ii. 8 and 20.

² ii. 16.

³ ii. 23 and 21.

⁴ ii. 8 and 22.

⁵ ii. 8 and 18 ('puffed up by his fleshly mind').

⁶ ii. 23.

⁷ i. 25 fol., ii. 1.

⁸ i. 23 and 25.

πλοῦτος, ver. 28, ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον,¹ and it is surely in reference to the claims of his opponents that Paul speaks so often here of 'filling' and 'fulness'; perhaps, indeed, he was borrowing their very terms. We should probably do the practical philosophy of which they made such show too much honour by ascribing it to a dualistic scheme of things. It must have been a mixture between certain fantastic speculations, on the one hand, concerning the spirit world—for the transition is easy between the mystic and the spiritualist—i.e. concerning the intermediate beings who lay between the invisible Godhead and lowly man, and whose favour must be secured or whose tyranny avoided; and, on the other, a host of precepts for reaching the goal through the practice of cults and through ascetic observances. Considerable relics of heathen, Hellenic and Oriental customs would here appear, though clothed in Christian forms; the old gods, whether good or evil, would be called Angels, and the ceremonial indispensable to the mind once nurtured amid the mysteries of the East fitted as closely as possible to that prescribed in the holy Scriptures of Israel, which the Gospel also acknowledged, but of course with a certain wilfulness (ἑθελοθησκία) in points of detail. The ascetic temperament also had its part, as with all the religious movements of that age. Whence the elements of their wisdom of mysteries really came, the false brethren themselves did not know, nor did they observe, any more than was observed by the later worshippers of the Virgin Mary and of the Saints, that it resulted in the expulsion of Christ from his unique position; they imagined that they had discovered perfect knowledge through the study of the Scriptures and the Gospel itself. Here, then, we have, in its main features, a tolerably clear picture of these heretics.

6. With this interpretation, moreover, the chief objection against the tradition, which never omits Colossians from among the Pauline Epistles, is removed. Baur imagines that he recognised in the misleaders of Colossæ the Gnostics who in the second century jeopardised the existence of the Church, and that the Epistle was composed in order to deal

¹ Cf. iii. 14.

a death-blow at Gnosticism in the name of the great Apostle. Others, again, have considered that in the polemical parts of the Epistle there were two layers lying one above the other, one of which was Pauline and contended against false prophets of the type of the 'weak brethren' of Rome—except that here they laid down as rules what at Rome they merely practised on their own account—while the other was later by many decades and dealt with Gnosticism as the arch-enemy. Here the picture of the heretics was painted over in such a way as to cause the Gnostic of the second century to be recognised in it. But all the traits that are in any way distinctive in the Epistle can easily be understood as united in a single class of 'teachers,' and these teachers again might very well have arisen in Paul's time. There is nothing that points to any of the greater Gnostic systems, which we can date with tolerable certainty—in fact the 'Gnosticism' that is attacked in Colossians is actually older than Christianity. It is true that we have no other evidence of such philosophers in South-Western Phrygia about the year 63, but, considering the state of our knowledge concerning that time and district, we have no right to expect such evidence, especially when it is a question, as here, of transitory phenomena. Moreover, if a Christian of the third or fourth generation A.D. were here attacking the Gnosticism of his time, we should justly be surprised at his silence upon the worst charges which from his point of view could be brought against it, and at his working instead with such feeble weapons.

If, on the other hand, Paul had to deal with men of the type described above, the course he adopted here was exceedingly natural. He does not attempt to go into details, because he was not accurately enough informed; he is content to emphasise the fact that, after what he had heard, he must affirm that they had fallen back into the bondage of outward ordinances and into a misconception of the dignity of Christ. But he has no cause to enter upon an angry invective against the supposed idolatry of the Colossians, still less to point out that these Jewish philosophers entertained, side by side, contradictory and irreconcilable theories: the latter was unnecessary, because he had no intention of

delivering a lecture on logic, and the former because these false teachers, with their worship of angels, did not call the monotheistic idea in question any more than Paul himself, with his worship of the Lord Jesus. Not God, but Christ in his position of the *highest*¹ was here threatened, and it was Paul's object to insist upon the unique position of his Master. The formulæ in which he here expresses the incomparable superiority of Christ over all the powers of this world, culminating in the words 'in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,'² are not, it is true, to be found in the earlier Epistles, and in i. 15-20 one might even recognise a change from the old Pauline Christology in a cosmological direction,³ new points of view and new interests being brought into the foreground. But if it was only by this means that he could put down grievous errors, he might well have accomplished such a change within himself; and the new formulæ were forced upon him by his new opponents. The idea, too, of the Church, i.e. the whole body of the Saints, as the Body of Christ⁴—which is to be met with both in 1. Corinthians⁵ and in Romans⁶—satisfies the needs of this controversy; it meant that all Christians without distinction should depend upon Christ, without any other mediators, advocates or contrivances for bringing them to salvation. There indeed was an occasion for the picture of the Head and the Body, which also illustrated so admirably the duty of holding fast to the Head. Nor is this conception of the Church by any means post-Pauline, for as early as 1. Corinthians⁷ Paul divides mankind into Jews, Gentiles and the Church of God. Colossians certainly does not aim at the glorification of the Church as the sole means to salvation, *extra quam nulla salus*, in the sense of a later time, but only at the preservation of all the rights of its Head: 'Christ alone,' 'all of us one in Christ,' have now, in consequence of the change of foe, become the watchwords in place of the anti-Judaistic '*sola fide*.' The mention of the sufferings endured

¹ i. 18; ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς πρωτεύων; cf. i. 15: πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως.

² ii. 9.

³ See especially i. 16, 19, 20, ii. 10.

⁴ i. 18, 24; ii. 19.

⁵ xii. 27 fol.

⁶ xii. 5.

⁷ x. 32.

by the Apostle for the Church, the 'body of Christ'—sufferings by which he 'filled up on his part that which was lacking of the afflictions of Christ'¹—would be intolerable in the mouth of a later writer, but Paul's Christian mysticism thereby attains its most characteristic expression. This participation, he means to say, exalted him so highly in all his sufferings that through them he approached nearer and nearer to Christ, and, as he says in Philippians,² 'became conformed unto his death.'

None but the Tübingen school have discovered a conciliatory tendency in an epistle so devoid of the slightest concessions to the Jewish Christians, and accordingly the only remaining argument worth mentioning against its authenticity is that of the difference of style. In syntax and vocabulary the Epistle to the Colossians has many peculiarities, particularly in the way of long strings of clauses and interminable periods, which look very much like patchwork, while, on the other hand, much of Paul's most habitual phraseology is absent. But the amount of agreement is, after all, much larger, and the long-winded style only occurs in passages directed against the false doctrine; nor must it be forgotten that Paul was not so thoroughly accustomed to these views as he was to those described in the Epistle to the Romans, and that excitement did not here lend him wings, as in the case of Galatians or 2. Corinthians. Moreover, the parallel argument in Philippians ii. 5–11 bears a stamp somewhat similar to that of the obnoxious parts of Colossians, and who could expect that Paul in his imprisonment and old age would overcome such difficult and complex dogmatic problems with the triumphant freshness and precision that he had displayed when in the zenith of his powers?

Against the hypothesis which Holtzmann has so ingeniously put forward, that the present Epistle to the Colossians represents a composite product—a genuine Pauline foundation with later interpolations from the hand of the author of Ephesians—we have the fact that the suspicion of such interpolation into this Epistle, which runs on in an even flow without obstacle or gap, would never have arisen but for

¹ i. 24.

² iii. 10.

the presence of the Epistle to the Ephesians beside it. Colossians in itself fulfils all the conditions which can reasonably be expected of an Epistle written by Paul to Colossæ—entirely without collaboration—in the circumstances represented above.

7. The purpose of the Epistle to the Ephesians is, in contradistinction to all the Pauline Epistles we have yet examined, little dependent upon the particular circumstances and needs of its readers; the writer's object is to impress upon them as decisively as possible the idea of the divinity and *unity* of the Church of Christ, a unity which did away with all distinctions between Jewish and Gentile Christians and all hesitation and error in doctrine; and, further, to unfold the consequences which ensued therefrom for the conduct of the members of this Church. Provided we are justified in defending its Pauline authorship at all, we might apply the name of 'the last testament of the dying Paul' to this Epistle¹ far rather than to Philippians, for although it hardly touches upon certain important sides of Paul's gospel—assuming them to be well known beforehand—it nevertheless gives a rich and wide development to some of its most fundamental ideas.

The very widespread and searching doubts entertained in this case even by scholars who are otherwise friendly to tradition relate principally to two questions: (1) whether Ephesians is to be considered as an epistle addressed by Paul to Ephesus, and (2) whether or not it is to be considered as a Pauline Epistle at all.

8. The answer to the first question should undoubtedly be in the negative. Paul could not have written to his Ephesian community, to which he had devoted several years of his best powers, and with which, according to Acts xx. 17-38—not to mention Romans xvi. and the hypothesis of the Ephesian Epistle—he had maintained such close relations ever since, in the calm tone of the Epistle to the Ephesians. He sends no special greetings either to or from anyone, and he writes only in his own name, even though Timothy, who was well known at Ephesus, was with him now, as he was when the Epistle to the Colossians was written. Writer and readers are here personally unknown to one another.² Yet our Epistle, written from

¹ In spite of vi. 19.

² iii. 2-4 and i. 15.

prison as it was, could not have been composed *before* Paul's long sojourn at Ephesus, simply because of its close connection with Colossians and Philemon; so that Paul, who since about the year 54 had known more definitely than by hearsay of the faith and love of the Ephesians, could not have written it to them at all. Moreover, the crucial *ἐν Ἐφέσῳ* of the address is textually untrustworthy. It is true that the Roman Canon of Muratori (*circa* 200 A.D.) knows of the Epistle as one directed to Ephesus, while an uninterrupted line of further witnesses to this tradition might be enumerated down to the present day; but the earliest Christian to whom we can refer for the superscriptions of Pauline Epistles, Marcion, sets down the Epistle as one 'to the Laodiceans,' and cannot therefore have read 'in Ephesus' in verse 1. From the way in which Tertullian proceeds against Marcion on this occasion we must conclude that he considered this superscription as an invention of his adversary's, but not as one involving the *erasure* of anything in the original text; in fact, Tertullian does not seem to have read any indications of place in verse 1 at all. And that manuscripts merely with the words *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσι καὶ πιστοῖς* were handed down as late as the fourth century, we have abundant evidence, amongst others, in Origen, Basil and Jerome.

Now, that anyone should intentionally have struck out an original *ἐν Ἐφέσῳ* is presumably not to be thought of—for it would have been replaced by something else and not simply erased—and the idea that there was originally no indication of place at all is even more fantastic, for the addresses of 2. Corinthians, Romans¹ and Philippians effectually prove that this was indispensable. We must assume, then, that the original mention of the addressees has accidentally disappeared, and that the words *ἐν Ἐφέσῳ* are the conjecture—although certainly an ancient one—of a copyist who wished to fill up the intolerable gap after *τοῖς οὖσιν* and who had received the superscription 'to the Ephesians' from tradition, which even Zahn here accuses of being in error. All sorts of explanations have been put forward of the origin of this mistake, but to me the simplest appears to be that the

¹ Rom. i. 7.

collector into whose hands the Epistle had fallen, unaddressed, could not endure the absence of superscription and put in a conjectural *πρὸς Ἐφεσίους* from the idea that the community of Ephesus, where Paul had laboured for three years, must surely have received a letter from its Apostle at one time or another.

Unfortunately, we are not in a position to replace this singularly mistaken conjecture by a better one. The 'Laodicea' of Marcion is possibly but another conjecture, though that of the most attentive reader of the Pauline Epistles. The fact that an epistle of Paul to Laodicea was mentioned in Colossians, but had already disappeared, would make it natural that the unaddressed document should be considered as the epistle there mentioned, especially as there was no desire to acknowledge the definite loss of any Apostolic Epistle. The conjecture is not a bad one, for the Laodicean epistle cannot have been written much before Colossians, so that the great similarity between the two would thereby be conveniently explained. The Laodiceans were personally unacquainted with Paul,¹ as ver. i. 15 of Ephesians would require, and Tychicus was probably the bearer of the epistle to Laodicea as well as of that to Colossae, which fits in admirably with Eph. vi. 21 fol. But, on the other hand, one cannot imagine any motive which could have induced Paul to treat the Laodiceans, with whom in reality he stood on the same footing as with the Colossians, in such a totally different way to avoid all individualising with them, and to show himself so distant with them while so friendly with the latter. In my opinion it is inconceivable that the Apostle should have taken up this tone towards any single community, but as we are nevertheless concerned with an epistle in which the writer draws a sharp distinction between himself and his readers—these latter merely forming a very large body, upon whom he impresses what all stood in equal need of—the assumption that Paul is here addressing the whole Gentile Christian world is misleading. In that case the words in question would originally have run *τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν ἔθνεσιν*. But, as a matter of fact, we learn nothing about the addressees

¹ Col. ii. 1.

from the Epistle except that they were now believers,¹ and had once been heathens.² Another objection to this hypothesis is that the remark about Tychicus in vi. 21 presupposes a more contracted circle of readers, for he had naturally not been charged to go round among all the Gentile-Christian communities. Moreover, in several passages³ the readers are distinguished from 'all the saints,' and ver. iii. 18 alone would prevent us from looking upon these latter as referring only to the Jewish Christians, or even, as some contend, to the community of Jerusalem.

If, therefore, we are dealing with a genuine epistle and not with the religious opinions of a later Christian, trying, clumsily enough, to act the part of an Apostle of the Gentiles writing to one of his communities, there is but one supposition left to us: Ephesians is a circular epistle addressed to a group of Gentile-Christian communities which had arisen without Paul's direct co-operation, which were on the whole in possession of the true Gospel, and upon which he was anxious to exercise a direct influence and to bestow some spiritual gift as soon as opportunity arose. The mission of Tychicus, who was going from Rome to Colossæ, now made it possible that these communities should be sought out; more than this it is not worth while to conjecture. It is but small satisfaction to declare that this circular epistle is identical with that 'from Laodicea' mentioned in Colossians iv. 16, and it is decidedly bold to conclude from the word ἐκ (τῆς) ἐκ Λαοδικίας that Paul was not referring there to an epistle to the Laodiceans but merely to one from Laodicea—that is, to one intended for Colossæ after Laodicea, but not destined to rest even there. Every unprejudiced reader would surely take these words as referring to the exchange of two equally valuable possessions by communities lying side by side. Thus, then, Paul must have written three epistles contemporaneously with Philemon—Colossians, Ephesians and the lost epistle to the Laodiceans—and we can therefore hardly wonder at finding constant repetitions and a certain tone of fatigue in the latest in date of the three. Of course Pau'

¹ i. 13, 15 fol.

² ii. 1, 11-13, 17 fol., iii. 1, iv. 17.

³ i. 15, iii. 18, vi. 18.

would not have left the addressees unnamed in the circular epistle; he needed only to choose the name of the province (or provinces), or else some other geographical term embracing the desired area; but the suggestion that Paul had had a number of copies of the epistle prepared, each with a blank after τοῖς οὖσιν, so that Tychicus should there insert the name of each new community that he visited—and in this way the words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ would have originated from the hand of Tychicus!—is an idea, after all, that savours too much of the modern practical spirit. According to our hypothesis, Ephesians would be definitely placed on the dividing-line between the Epistles proper and the Catholic Epistles, in which the epistolary element is reduced to a literary form, and curiously enough there are not a few material points of contact, too, between our Epistle and these latter.

9. But the importance of the question above discussed shrinks to the vanishing point if Ephesians was merely foisted upon Paul, and if its addressees have as little reality as its nominal author. It is true that the external evidence is favourable to the Epistle; it was much used by the Christian literature of the second century, very probably as early as the First Epistle of Peter; indeed, it has actually been proposed to ascribe both these Epistles to the same writer. This alone is enough to prevent our assigning it to a date later than 100 A.D., so that the hypotheses of the Tübingen school as to its anti-Gnostic or anti-Montanist tendencies are negatived by the date of its composition. On the other hand, the supposed literary obligations of this Epistle to the four Principal Epistles or to any written Gospels are nowhere so much as rendered probable. But there is no lack of very serious considerations. The Epistle possesses a quite unusual amount of words peculiar to itself; for instance the devil, regularly spoken of by Paul under the name of Satan—though once called the 'Tempter' and once Beliar—is here 'διάβολος,'¹ and the unwonted stiffnesses of style in Colossians i. and ii. are here substantially exaggerated and multiplied. Cumbersome chains of sentences, full of

¹ iv. 27, vi. 11.

participles and relative pronouns, are the rule; there are numerous lengthy passages¹ each consisting in reality of a single sentence—into which only a few arbitrary stops can be introduced. Instances of the coupling of two synonymous nouns by means of a genitive or a preposition are remarkably numerous²; there is an obvious overcrowding and diffuseness of style (e.g. iii. 18: 'to apprehend . . . what is the breadth and length and height' &c.) and the thoughts are often obscured, as though stifled, by the rush of words. On the other hand, much that is specifically Pauline may be found in Ephesians, such as the metaphorical use of *οἰκοδομή*,³ *περισσεύειν* used transitively,⁴ the words *καταντᾶν*, *ὑπαρβῶν*, *ἀπολύτρωσις*, *ἀνακεφαλαιοῦσθαι*, and so on, and in both parts of the Epistle we are continually being reminded of Pauline ideas and modes of expression. At any rate, since style is greatly influenced by the mood of the writer (see pp. 137, 141), we could not, if the *pros* and *cons* were otherwise evenly balanced, let this argument turn the scale.

We may, however, perceive here no less than in Colossians a development of the Pauline doctrine in the direction of Johannine theology. The lively interest in the universal Church which dominates the Epistle is certainly a new feature; but here again it is a question of a *development* of existing germs, a thing that could not have been the mere work of a later writer. The lack of definite features in its teaching is unquestionable; in fact, Ephesians almost gives one the impression of a printed sermon; but then we possess no other circular epistle from Paul's hand to use as a standard by which to reject this one. To say that the falseness of the situation appears in the statements made by the Apostle concerning himself or his readers is surely an exaggeration, and the hyperbole of iii. 8—in *minimis Deus maximus*—has by no means an un-Pauline ring. The readers are represented—quite in accordance with the circumstances of the case—as having formerly been Gentiles, and as still

¹ i. 3-14, i. 15-23, ii. 1-10, i. 1. 1-19.

² E.g. ii. 14, τὸ μεσότηχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ; ii. 15, ὁ νόμος τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν ἡμαῖν; iv. 13, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

³ ii. 21, iv. 12, 16 and 29.

⁴ i. 8.

standing much in need of greater perfection in knowledge and morality, but there is no indication that the writer is addressing a second generation, which would of course have contained a certain number of Christians by birth. The few sentences that are tinged with controversy¹ would suit the mood—and the date as well—of the Epistle to the Colossians. The struggle against Judaism seems indeed to be laid aside, but why should Paul have carried it on in a place where the danger that threatened was from heathenism alone? Of course the whole tone of the Epistle would be quite comprehensible on the supposition that a Pauline Christian of about the year 90 was its author, but with a general work like this the only question is whether it would be incomprehensible as coming whence it professes to come, i.e. from Paul, and whether it becomes more comprehensible as to purpose, form and ideas if we assume that it was the work of a later 'forger.'

The greatest difficulties are presented by individual passages; not indeed by iv. 5, for the words '*one* faith, *one* baptism' become perfectly natural when considered in their context, and *πίστις* does not mean a profession of faith, but faith itself, the sole condition of salvation, as baptism is the assurance of it. But vv. iv. 11, ii. 20 and iii. 5 do present such difficulties. In the first of these the Church offices established by God are enumerated—'Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers'—and here the absence of the ecstatic 'spiritual gifts,' which Paul had rated so highly in 1. Corinthians xii.-xiv., is considered to be a sign of later authorship.

But, in the first place, the 'prophets' undoubtedly belong to this missing class, and, in the second, the list is not intended to be a complete one; moreover in this setting, where Paul's thoughts are turned towards the building up of the Church in unity of spirit, his choice is by no means ill directed. Evangelists are certainly not mentioned by Paul in any other Epistle. Yet how else was he to describe the men who had first proclaimed the Gospel in these Asiatic communities, but had claimed the title neither of Apostles nor of Prophets? Gratitude, if nothing else, obliged him to mention them, and

¹ iv. 14 fol., v. 6.

the term 'teacher' was not comprehensive enough. Again, the words of ii. 20, that the Church 'is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone,' would certainly, *ceteris paribus*, seem to point to an Apostle's disciple rather than to an Apostle as the author, while it sounds stranger still from the lips of Paul that the mystery of Christ was now revealed 'unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit' (iii. 5). Nevertheless, as early as 1. Corinthians¹ the Apostles are already treated in some sort as a self-consistent order, and if in carrying out the simile of the building-up of the Church the position of corner-stone was reserved for Christ, it was natural that the Apostles should be assigned the part of foundation which in 1. Corinthians² had been assigned to Christ. The self-confidence shown in 1. Corinthians iii. 10 is also scarcely less than that expressed in Ephesians ii. 20. And in defence of iii. 5 it may be pointed out that the title of 'holy' means more to our perceptions than it would have to Paul's, for he calls every believer a 'saint.' Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that it is one thing to count oneself as belonging to the community of saints, and quite another to speak of the 'holy Apostles' as including oneself in their number, and I am unable to attribute such a breach of taste to Paul. But might not the word *ἀγίοις* have been an interpolation prompted by primitive piety?

But, whatever be the decision at which we arrive, the relationship between Ephesians and Colossians must always remain remarkable. The points of resemblance both in expression and matter are so numerous as to exclude all idea of coincidence. Except for a few verses in chap. i., the passages in which Colossians stands alone, without parallels in Ephesians, are only four,³ while, on the other hand, Ephesians contains but seven⁴ which are independent of Colossians. Even in these, frequent points of agreement with Colossians may be found. This is all the more re-

¹ xv. 9-11.

² iii. 11.

³ ii. 1-9 and 16-23 (though with vv. 7 and 19 excepted), iii. 1-4, iv. 9-18.

⁴ i. 3-14, iii. 13-21, iv. 1-16, 17 fol., 20 fol., v. 23-32, vi. 10-17.

markable because the anti-heretical purpose of Colossians is by no means that of the author of Ephesians; nor can there be any question of a simple absorption into the one Epistle of integral parts of the other, for the parallels to Col. i. 3-27, for instance, are scattered through the first four chapters of Ephesians in an entirely different order. What is true of Colossians, indeed, may also be affirmed of Ephesians, viz. that no one who did not have Colossians before him would imagine the Epistle to have been composed by patchwork and the interpolation of extraneous pieces. Professor Holtzmann, however, after the most searching examination of the materials, has conceived the idea that the indebtedness belongs partly to Ephesians and partly to Colossians; but if we reject as too complicated the hypothesis he has built up upon it, by which Ephesians would come to lie *between* a genuine epistle of Paul to Colossæ and our present Epistle to the Colossians (which he considers as the product of a later re-casting in which Ephesians was drawn upon), the simplest explanation would still be that *one* man—in this case Paul—had written the two related Epistles, at short intervals, but Ephesians probably a little later, and that certain thoughts and modes of expression which were still in his mind from the earlier Epistle had found their way plentifully into the later. For it would only be true to say that the author *must* have had the earlier work before him when he wrote the later, if we assume that Ephesians was the work of a later writer, but even on comparing Eph. vi. 21 fol. with Col. iv. 7 fol. it would not be true of Paul, precisely because the reproduction of the one in the other is not literal enough. The curious mixture in it of original thought-exposition with dependence on the parallel Epistle—which must always be admitted—can best be explained by supposing that in both Epistles the same writer was pouring forth his soul, and that since his circles of readers were not contiguous he did not too anxiously avoid repetition.

Nor has a clear hypothesis of the circumstances under which a *Paulus redivivus* might have composed the Epistle to the Ephesians ever been provided, for it is impossible to see what purpose he could have served or why he made such

a particularly thorough use of Colossians, when he himself **did** not lack independent ideas and was also acquainted with **other** Pauline Epistles. Many separate points in the Epistle **would** certainly become more intelligible on the assumption **that** it was written by an Apostle's disciple—though even **then** he must have come into extraordinarily close contact **with** his master—but not so the Epistle as a whole. Although, **then**, Ephesians may not belong to our unquestioned Pauline heritage, it would yet be equally impossible to deny the Apostle's authorship with any confidence.

be his own and his readers' goal¹ was solely dependent in his eyes on the highest training of the power 'to discern good and evil.'² The writer never loses sight of this fundamental idea; all the subtleties of his Scriptural proof are only intended to help in establishing beyond question the perfection of Christ and of Christianity, and thereby in rendering inoperative all temptations to an abandonment of Christ.

The Epistle begins at once with defining the revelation of God in His Son as the ultimate and most effectual.³ Hereupon the exaltation of the Son above all the *angels* is demonstrated:⁴ although he had for a short time been 'made lower than the angels,' had 'partaken of flesh and blood,' had been delivered up to death and exposed to temptation, this had only come to pass in order that he might carry out his work of salvation and be a true brother to mankind. In the next chapter⁵ the superiority of Jesus over Moses and Joshua is likewise established. Moses was only faithful as a 'servant in the house,' whereas Christ was faithful as a 'son, over his house,' and Joshua had not been able to lead his people to true rest, for the fulfilment of that promise was to be the work of Christ. The next section compares Christ, the true Melchisedek, with the spiritual head of the ancient Israelites, the High Priest Aaron⁶: the latter and his successors, we are told, were appointed without an oath from God, succeeded one another at short intervals, and were obliged to offer up sacrifices for their own sins as well as for those of the people; whereas the High Priest Christ received his office with an oath, would abide in it unchangeable for ever and was free from sin. But—and this was the main point—it was not his Person alone which was so highly exalted; his Work also towered infinitely high above that of the High Priests of the Old Testament,⁷ for he performed it in Heaven, and they but in the lowly tabernacle; his sacrifice was of his own blood, theirs but of the blood of beasts: he had redeemed our sins once and for all, while the Levitical priesthood must continually renew their imperfect offerings.

There is no lack of practical applications in each of these

¹ vi. 1.

² v. 14.

³ i. 1-3.

⁴ i. 4-ii. 18.

⁵ iii. 1-iv. 13.

⁶ iv. 14-vii. 28.

⁷ viii. 1-x. 18.

main divisions of the first part,¹ and next the author's exposition of the work of the eternal High Priest and of the foundation of the new covenant leads him to utter an earnest warning to his readers² to hold fast this splendid heritage of hope and to see that their actions matched it, since the most terrible punishment was in store for him who sinned consciously and, as it were, trod Christ under foot after having known the truth.³ They who formerly, in times of grievous suffering, had proved themselves so gloriously by their cheerful self-sacrifice and patience, must not now, when the day of recompense drew near, cast away their endurance, resignation and joy.⁴ Belief without trust in what they believed was nothing, since faith consisted precisely in reliance on good things hoped for but invisible. This it was that was so vividly attested by the long succession of the heroes of faith from Abel down to their own day.⁵ Therefore they too must show some of the patience of Him who was crucified, especially since the wholesome chastening which they endured was sent from God⁶; they must follow after peace and holiness before it was too late,⁷ for was not the punishment of him who spurned the revelation of God in Christ so much the more terrible than that which was threatened in the Old Testament, as the perfect appearance of God in the heavenly Jerusalem, the new heaven and the new earth, was more imposing than his former manifestation to Moses in fire and smoke and rushing wind?⁸ Then follow a few special exhortations,⁹ but also in the course of them¹⁰ a warning against 'strange teachings,' which, perhaps in the interests of a hair-splitting spirit in the choice of meats, imperilled the fundamental notion of 'Jesus alone,' and diverted attention from the true, spiritual sacrifices. The end is formed by vv. 18-25, which consist of personal requests, benedictions, charges and greetings.

2. We have now to establish—for here we must proceed with the greatest care from firm to doubtful ground—the

¹ E.g., ii. 1-4, iii. 7-iv. 2, iv. 14-16, v. 11-vi. 12.

² x. 19-25.

³ xi. 1-40.

⁴ xii. 18-29.

⁵ x. 26-31.

⁶ xii. 1-11.

⁷ xiii. 1-17.

⁸ x. 32-39.

⁹ xii. 12-17.

¹⁰ Vv. 9-16.

assume that two lines or more have disappeared, consisting in an introduction in which the writer explained to readers what he intended to set before them and by which right he addressed them: informing them, in fact, that enclosed for their perusal an address of exhortation. At last, then, we should possess intact (i. 1-xiii. 21), while the framework but the last and smaller portion (vv. 22-25) would have been preserved.

3. For about 1500 years the tradition of the Church almost unanimously held that Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The history of the Canon shows that the Eastern, especially the Alexandrian, Church received Hebrews early into its *corpus Paulinarum*, and—with numerous learned hypotheses, indeed, as to the draughtsman of the text—retained it there unanimously; that in the West, on the other hand, it was known even earlier, but not as a Pauline Epistle, and that it was only after the middle of the fourth century, under the pressure of Eastern tradition, that it gradually received recognition as a Pauline Epistle and at the same time found its way into the New Testament. The suspicious attitude of the Latins, who certainly could have taken exception to the *contents* of the Epistle, at least during the decisive period—later they might have been dissatisfied with vv. vi. 4-8—is alone sufficient to raise certain doubt as to the trustworthiness of the Pauline hypothesis; our next endeavour would be to explain these suspicions as arising from a variant tradition as to the author. And here we find in effect that Tertullian¹ and Novatian speak of Barnabas as such, apparently unaware of any doubt as to his authorship. Then, again, it is very easy to see how in seeking for an author for the Epistle—now needless, and full as it was of the deepest wisdom—Paul's name was thought of, for not only was Paul the Epistle-writer *ἐξοχόν*, but the antinomian tendency of Hebrews, and the systematic setting of the new revelation and the new covenant before the old, seemed entirely Pauline; isolated sentences

¹ About 220.

² After 250.

and words¹ not less so. Who but Paul could have written Heb. vii. 18, the assertion about the annulling of the commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness: 'For the law made nothing perfect'? Verse xiii. 9 surely suggested Paul's imprisonment, and perhaps also xiii. 3, but the mention above all of 'our brother Timothy'² seemed to force the assumption that the same man was responsible for this epistle as he from whom 1. Thessalonians,³ Philemon and 2. Corinthians had proceeded. It is true that we have here treated vv. xiii. 22-25 as genuine; but since 23 fits in so well with 19, and 22^a is equally appropriate after the many words of blame that had gone before, while 22^b—the smooth excuse of the practised orator—falls in so well with the character of the whole Epistle, the passage seems to me after all to be more comprehensible as the chief cause of the attribution to Paul of the Epistle, than as its subsequently invented justification. For in the latter case the inventor must have exercised a marvellous self-restraint, and his good fortune in that none of the friends of the Barnabas-hypothesis found out his stratagem, must have been even more marvellous.

Nevertheless, the Pauline hypothesis must be absolutely given up. Even its first enthusiastic supporters, the Alexandrian masters Clement and Origen (about and after 200 A.D.), became convinced of the suspicious fact that the style of Hebrews was utterly different from that of Paul. And indeed the difference in vocabulary is already striking enough: for instance, the Pauline *Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς* is altogether absent, while even *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός* is only to be found in three places⁴; a favourite conjunction with Hebrews is *ὅθεν*, which Paul never uses, and Hebrews employs the word *ἀνακαίνιζεν*⁵ where Paul writes *ἀνακαινοῦν* (*ἀνακαίνωσις*).⁶ But, above all, the manner, the style and the temperament are entirely different here from what they were in the ten Pauline Epistles which we have been discussing. Instead of the

¹ E.g., ii. 2, cf. Gal. iii. 19; ii. 10, cf. Rom. xi. 36; x. 10 fol. 19-23, xiii. 1-6.

² xiii. 23.

³ vi. 6.

⁴ Esp. ver. iii. 2.

⁵ 2. Cor. iv. 16; Col. iii. 10.

⁶ x. 10. xiii. 8 and 21.

sufferings and death are also recalled in other passages, but not with the same fervour as with Paul. The idea of justification has disappeared; the antithesis between flesh and spirit, upon which Paul founded his religious conception of the world, is nowhere brought forward as the directing force in the process of salvation. Paul's mystical conception of this has vanished. Hebr. vi. 4 and x. 29 are the only passages of the Epistle in which it is claimed that any trace exists of the lofty feeling which marks the possessor of the Holy Spirit, and even there the expressions are not Pauline. It is true that in the picture of Christ there is nothing antagonistic to the Pauline conception, but there is a difference in the salient points; the author of Hebrews is mainly concerned with representing Jesus as the Son of God, who came from heaven to earth and returned again to heaven as inheritor of the dominion of the world, as our example in obedience and our forerunner in the eternal blessedness which consists in nearness to God. In its Christology, though not in that alone, Hebrews stands intermediate between the Epistles of Paul and John. But it is not my intention to give a complete enumeration of its divergences from Pauline ideas; further evidence against the tradition will appear hereafter.

4. Since the question of authorship will ever remain the most critical, let us now attempt to set down the internal evidence to be obtained from Hebrews as to its origin. Here we find that the date may be fixed at once with tolerable probability. Our Epistle was unquestionably used in the so-called First Epistle of Clement, which was addressed from Rome to Corinth shortly before the year 100; this alone would be enough to fix the *terminus ad quem* of Hebrews at about the year 95. And since it is natural to consider the 'Timothy' of xiii. 23 as Paul's old friend, this would be reason enough for going back a little earlier in time, for this Timothy, who had just been liberated and was about to start on a journey, could hardly have been a very aged man. On the other hand, it seems probable that Paul was dead, for so long as he was alive it is difficult to find room for this im-

prisonment of Timothy ; and, more than this, those men ' who had the rule over you ' and who ' spake unto you the word of God ' (xiii. 7), had by now brought their pilgrimages to an end. It is natural to suppose that they had met their end through martyrdom, but even then it is quite arbitrary to confine the expression ' them that had the rule over you ' to Peter and Paul. Ver. ii. 3 does not say, indeed, that Jesus' hearers had left the stage, and that the Apostolic Age had disappeared, but yet a certain interval of time is implied between those primitive days and the Christianity of the present. Verses v. 12¹ and vi. 7 in particular would lead us to assume that the Christianity of those addressed was of tolerably long standing ; but this, after all, gives us but an approximate idea. An important point seems to be that in x. 32-34 there is a question of ' the former days,' in which the addressees, Christians already, had proved themselves in the grievous afflictions that had come over the believers, partly through their own sufferings and partly through their faithful comradeship with other heroes of the faith. Now it seems that a second trial of this sort had recently set in, but, to the writer's sorrow, with few glorious results. Surely, too, vv. xii. 1-11 and the whole of chap. xi.² were meant to kindle—not merely as a precautionary measure—their courage and their joy in suffering. This suggests the persecution of the Christians under the Emperor Domitian (81-96), at least to those who consider that xiii. 7 refers to the martyrdoms under Nero.

It is true that the majority of scholars place the Epistle between the years 64 and 70, and we cannot prove the impossibility of so doing. But, besides the considerations above mentioned, the isolated features of the picture which the Epistle gives of the contemporary Christian world speak in favour of assigning it to a later date—say, the year 85. The idealism of former days has disappeared³; there is no longer any serious belief in the long and vainly hoped-for Second Coming and the heavenly reward—especially as so many persons have died without receiving it⁴—and, at any rate, no one is prepared to hazard, if need be, his

¹ ' By reason of the time, ye ought to have been teachers.'

² Esp. vv. 35^b-38.

³ xii. 3, 12 fol.

⁴ xi. 13, 40.

πρὸς Ἑβραίους does not help us much towards a decision, for we only have evidence of it towards the end of the second century—although then it is uncontested, and East and West possess it alike; but it gives far too strong an impression of having been decided on to suit the contents,¹ by men who were seeking an address to correspond with those of the rest of the Pauline Epistles. It is for us only a piece of the same ecclesiastical tradition which has shown itself so little trustworthy in the matter of the author.

But, even if it were genuine, the choice would still be an open one between (1) Hebrew-speaking and therefore Palestinian Christian communities, (2) those of the Dispersion consisting of former Jews,² and even (3) Jewish Christian members of a great Gentile community—for, after all, the addressees can only have been baptised Christians. But it is only the force of tradition which can possibly explain the astounding fact that to this day the community of Jerusalem—which did indeed migrate to Pella in the year 66 or 67—is seriously considered as having been the recipient of Hebrews. All the evidence we have speaks against this theory. Even though Greek may have been understood in Palestine, it would still have been scarcely suitable to address an epistle written in the most polished Greek to the Jewish-Christian community of Jerusalem, while to have made use of the Septuagint alone would have been naïve indeed. Nor is it easy to suppose that the Christians of Jerusalem should have looked forward so eagerly to the return of Timothy. According to Gal. ii. 10 the community there was miserably poor, but such is not the impression we receive of its readers from Hebr. x. 34, still less from vi. 10, whoever may have been the recipient of the succour there mentioned. And is it probable that our author would have waited till ii. 3 to tell such Christians as these who was their security for the true Gospel—that in his warnings against degeneration and backsliding he should have overlooked his most effective argument, the fact that they were walking on the very ground

¹ Thus as early as i. 1 we have 'the fathers,' in ii. 16, 'Abraham's seed,' and xiii. 13 is still more suggestive.

² Thus in Philip. iii. 5, the Tarsian Paul is called *Ἑβραῖος*.

over which Jesus had borne his Cross, and on which he had appeared in glory as the Risen One?

There are fewer objections to the countless other hypotheses—such as those of Alexandria, Antioch, Jamnia and Ravenna—but this is chiefly because we know next to nothing of the earliest history of these communities. The only supposition that is really encouraged by the Epistle itself—although absolute certainty is nevertheless out of the question—is that Hebrews was addressed to the place where it first made its appearance, *i.e.* to Rome. In Rome Timothy was certainly well known and beloved, and he might have been expelled thence for a time by the authorities; the greeting from ‘them of Italy’ would also suit Rome well, for these men were probably Christians now in the writer’s company, but far from their own homes; and how but through some local connection should they and no others be linked so closely to the recipients of the letter?

It is true that the Roman community was not a Hebrew one in the year 90, nor even in the year 66. But it is surely nothing but custom and an imperfect comprehension of the writer’s mode of argument that still leads so many to consider the Jewish-Christian character of the recipients as an axiom, or, as they put it, ‘a self-evident conclusion.’ Even if Rome is not its right address, we must still assert that Hebrews was directed simply to Christians, without any reference to their nationality, and that the question of the origin of these members of the true People of God existed neither for the writer nor for the readers of the Epistle. The words ‘the fathers’¹ and ‘the seed of Abraham’² are explained by Romans iv. 1 and 12; and passages like ii. 2 and 3 and iii. 5 and 6—in which the ‘*we*’ is said to have been meant as an antithesis—if anything, prevent the identification of those called to the salvation of the New Covenant with the members of the Old. Verse ix. 15 does not by any means oblige us to regard those ‘that had been called’ as the perpetrators of the ‘transgressions that were under the first covenant’; it is merely the writer’s object to teach men to regard the death of Jesus as much in the light of a termination of the period of

¹ i. 1.² ii. 16.

transgression as in that of an introduction to the period of the eternal inheritance; for the threats of punishment in the Old Covenant must first be carried out in that death before the new age of fulfilment could begin. The mention of the *man* whom Jesus led to salvation¹ is surely meant as a comparison with the 'small people' of the Old Testament. In ii. 9 we hear that Jesus tasted death 'for every man,' and since in vii. 27 and xiii. 12 he is described as having done this for 'the people,' and as having been able to make propitiation for the sins of the people, this means something different from 'the people' of the Old Testament: it means the Elect, the People of God. In vii. 11 and ix. 19, the author speaks of the people to whom the law of Moses was given as an alien body. Is it possible that the saints, whose way into the Holy Place now lay open before them for all time, could be identical or, indeed, even commensurate with the people,⁴ whose 'errors' could only be imperfectly removed by the worship of the Old Covenant? And does the description of his readers as men 'cleansed from dead works' serve the living God?⁵ apply so very aptly to converted *Jews*?

A still stronger argument is afforded by v. 12-vi. according to which these readers needed again and again to be informed of 'the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God,' and even of such things as 'repentance from dead works,' 'faith towards God,' 'teaching of baptisms and of laying on of hands,' 'the resurrection of the dead and the eternal judgment.' Of these things it was surely unnecessary to remind men who had once been Jews. Besides this, the faults which the writer contends against as of the first magnitude among his readers—fornication, the want of zeal of vigorous faith and of joy in hope—point rather to the community of Gentile Christians. If, however, it be urged that the writer's arguments move exclusively upon an Old Testament foundation, and that chaps. vii.-ix. especially presuppose an intimate acquaintance with the religious ordinances of the Old Testament, it is at most thereby proved

¹ ii. 10, ix. 28, xii. 15.² ii. 17.³ ix. 8.⁴ ix. 7.⁵ ix. 14.

that many Gentile Christian readers must have misunderstood the author's meaning. But although this would apply to many a Jewish Christian reader too, and although the speculations of Hebrews are devoid of all convincing power for us to-day, the author himself certainly believed that they would have a great effect; and since the Christians of that day had other needs than those of ours, and considered it one of their first duties to be fully acquainted with the Holy Scriptures—with Leviticus no less than with the Psalms—they probably did have such an effect.

But, it may be urged, what if the deadly sin mentioned specifically and threatened with the direst punishment in Hebrews—that apostasy against which the writer warns us—signified a *relapse from Christianity into Judaism*? The only passage which might seem to suggest this interpretation is xiii. 9-16, where the advice concerning the proper sacrifices and such as would be well pleasing to God does certainly sound as though the 'meats' which were so important in the readers' eyes were meats of sacrifice. But here the end of verse 9 shows precisely that the readers themselves had not yet learnt the worthlessness of such meats (*οἱ περιπατοῦντες* are not the same persons as those addressed in the preceding *μὴ παραφέρεσθε*: a theologian of the first century would never have characterised the Judaistic preaching as 'divers and strange teachings'); rather some new heresy had recently made its appearance among them—some teaching of a Judaistic character, perhaps like that of Colossæ, which found favour with the Christians of that day in their craving for reality. But that this was not the most serious danger, but only a symptom of the general falling-off in religious energy, is shown by the mere fact that it is only mentioned cursorily at the end of the Epistle and met by the fluent methods of an artificial exegesis. Since it is here,¹ however, that the cry is raised, 'Let us therefore go forth unto Jesus without the camp . . . for we have not here an abiding city,' the patrons of the Hebrew hypothesis interpret this as a summons to the readers to leave behind them the national and religious fabric of Israel to which they belonged.

¹ ver. 13.

The readers themselves would hardly have understood so dark a speech, and a form of rhetoric which brought in the main idea of the Epistle so incidentally—*à propos* of a statement about sacrifices—and expected success to follow would indeed be strange. The going forth to Jesus is equivalent to a searching for the future city, and the camp which was to be abandoned represents the outward world¹ with its pleasures—in fact the meaning of this verse is exactly the same as that of iv. 11, ‘let us give diligence to enter into that rest.’ Nor does the writer speak of the ‘weakness and unprofitableness’ of the Law² out of anxiety lest his readers should once more subject themselves to it, but because it was in this way that he could most triumphantly demonstrate the dignity and sublimity of the Christian revelation. He knows that the fair growth of the Christian spirit among his readers was threatened less by false teachers than by all manner of temptations to sin, to recantation in adversity and trouble, when their endurance was put to too severe a test, and to perplexity concerning the prophecies, whose fulfilment was too long delayed. These things he hopes to check by making it clear to them with all his theological skill and all his earnestness of conscience, that the religion of the New Covenant rested on a firm³ foundation, that it fulfilled all the prophecies, and with its infinite wealth in heavenly goods could never make too high a claim upon their conduct, or be too dearly bought by any sacrifice.

I repeat once more: all these considerations by no means exclude Jewish-born Christians from among the addressees of Hebrews; but the author himself is at bottom indifferent as to what the brethren had believed before their enlightenment; for him Christianity was a *new religion*, and it is principally a matter of accident that from isolated indications let fall by the writer, it appears that he himself conceived of his hearers as former idolaters. But it was only possible to ignore the difference between ‘Gentile and Jew’ with such absolute freedom, after Paul had completed his mission, with its profound effect upon the history of the

¹ x. 5, xi. 7, 38.² vii. 18 fol.³ *βέβαιος*, ii. 2, iii. 6, 14, vi. 19, ix. 17.

world; and where else than in Rome could the conditions for this attitude of indifference have been so favourable?

Thus, then, we find both Zahn and Harnack agreeing as to Rome, but both qualifying their assignment; Zahn adds that it was 'a group of Roman Christians consisting entirely of native Jews,' while Harnack describes them as 'a small circle of Christians (a single household of the faithful) in Rome.' The arguments which they bring forward do not seem to me to be convincing. The theory of a *Jewish* group has been already disposed of, and why should we suppose that the author did not write to a whole community? First, they reply, because those to whom the Epistle was addressed formed an absolutely united and harmonious group, and such uniformity in religious and moral conditions would have been incredible in so large and varied a community as that of Rome. But we do not know whether the author of Hebrews had sufficient art to throw light on the different shades of opinion which certainly existed, or whether he even wished to do so: was not his chief object, perhaps, to bring into prominence the fundamental errors in which one and all were partakers? The larger the circle to whom he wrote, the easier would it be, as well as the more fruitful from an educational point of view, to employ this method of treating the subject; it would have been little short of tactless in addressing a household of which he knew every member personally. Secondly, it is urged that the warning in v. 12 (that his readers ought long since to have been teachers) would not be appropriate if addressed to a community in which youths and new converts were constantly to be found: it must be intended for a group of older Christians. But did the house-community never increase? and can we seriously think of it as of a school from which in course of time bands of teachers regularly emerged? The *ὀφείλοντες εἶναι διδάσκαλοι* is intended to be taken *cum grano salis*, and serves to emphasise the contrast between the ideal and the real. But the ideal could be applied in an unqualified degree to the collective community, whose ultimate aim must indeed be to teach, even though all its members did not attempt it in so subtle a form as the author of Hebrews, or even by word of mouth

Apollos hypothesis applies almost equally to Aquila (or to his wife, if anyone can discover a feminine temperament or feminine fancy in the Epistle), viz. the probability of a continuous friendship with Timothy, the gift of teaching, the high culture (Apollos was an Alexandrian, but Priscilla and Aquila had expounded to this Alexandrian the tenets of Christianity), the fiery zeal for the Gospel, the close connection with Pauline theology, the freedom from the Law, the familiarity with Pauline forms of speech not necessarily resting on the study of his Epistles. Indeed, we might have expected that upon either of these the Pauline Gospel in all its fulness would have had a more powerful effect. We do not know whether Apollos ever went to Rome; Aquila and Priscilla, for their part, left Rome about 52 A.D. and generously supported Paul in Corinth and Ephesus; they could in no case have founded their Roman household-community before 52, but must have gone back from Ephesus to Rome and again have emigrated thence, or perhaps have been expelled from it. Some have felt justified in inferring from Romans xvi. 3 fol. that they returned to Rome before 58,¹ in spite of the passage in 2. Timothy iv. 19, where they are mentioned as living in Ephesus. But we know far too little of the group which surrounded Paul to be able to say that only Apollos and Priscilla satisfy the demands which must be made for the author of Hebrews.

For Barnabas there is the evidence of the Latins; but may not their evidence be founded on error there no less than in the case of the so-called Epistle of Barnabas, which we find among the Apostolic Fathers and which no one now ascribes to Barnabas? Is not this 'Barnabae' just such an hypothesis of the Romans as the Παύλου is an hypothesis of the Alexandrians? In any case, we should have to suppose that Barnabas had developed greatly since the event spoken of in Gal. ii. 13—but that is not inconceivable. Can we, however, credit the Levite, to whom Jerusalem was thoroughly familiar with misunderstandings in regard to Old Testament ceremonial such as those of ix. 3 fol., and vii. 27? According to ix. 4 the censer stood in the Holy of Holies; according to vii. 22

¹ Against this see above, pp. 109–111.

the high-priest offered his sacrifices daily for his own sins and the sins of the people: none but the exegete who takes the critical method of Hebrews for his model, will believe that *ἔχουσα θυμιατήριον* signifies only an ideal adjunct of the altar of the Holy of Holies, and that *καθ' ἡμέραν* means the same thing as *κατ' ἐνιαυτόν*. Others again see in such errors (which, moreover, need not be taken too seriously) nothing but the effects of a mistaken point of view: the author, they say, drew his picture of Jewish worship only from the study of the Scriptures. This is a point against Barnabas, and the absolute indifference of the writer to the antagonism between Jew and Gentile would be as remarkable in him as in Aquila, Paul or any others who had fought the battle of this fundamental principle. For the argument that Barnabas, the *υἱὸς παρακλήσεως*,¹ might well have written this *λόγος παρακλήσεως*, as the Epistle declares itself to be,² is surely only meant as a joke. Accordingly, the Barnabas hypothesis is not one which 'has all the probabilities on its side'; but we should do best simply to decline to give any answer to the question of the writer's name. It would be far more valuable if we could give a sketch of his personality, but unfortunately the author, like everything personal in Hebrews, retires so much into the background that we must confine ourselves to a few indications, completing what was said on pp. 149, 152 and 153 above.

The safest conclusion is that in him ideas fundamentally Pauline were combined with numerous elements of *Alexandrian* theology, in such a way that he must be looked upon as a unique phenomenon in the history of the first century. The author was a *Paulinising Christian of Alexandrian education*. And since there was only a Jewish Alexandrinism at that time, he must have received this education and brought it with him into Christianity as a Jew—for to consider him as a Gentile by birth at such an early period would surely be somewhat bold. That he had read the works of the leader of the Jewish school of Alexandria, Philo,³ is, if not absolutely beyond question, at least extremely probable, when we consider his relatively numerous points of contact with that writer,

¹ Acts iv. 36.

² Heb. xiii. 22.

³ Died A.D. 40.

e.g. in his Christological terms. For it goes without saying, that the similarity between him and Philo was in a sense 'formal and confined,' seeing that the latter had remained a Jew while the author of our Epistle had become a Christian. His taste not being identical with that of the modern 'historian' he probably did not find the writings of the Alexandrian Jew so distressingly dull. The form of exegesis in Hebrews, consisting in a reasoning from symbols, is very Philonian, and the description of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies as the first and second tabernacles,¹ in connection with the first and second Covenants, is a model of this kind. The antitheses between shadow and reality,² created and uncreated,³ things divine and things earthly,⁴ things of the past⁵ and things to come⁶ (which for the believer indeed are already present), things transient and things enduring,⁷ rule the thoughts of the exegetist, not that between sin and grace. What was essential in his eyes to a true comprehension of the Old Testament revelation was to recognise behind the shadow, the emblem, the parable, the antitype (*εἰκὼν, σκία, ὑπόδειγμα, παραβολή, ἀντίτυπον*) the forms of the things themselves⁸; and the more artificial and far fetched were the means of attaining to such knowledge, the more convincingly would they act upon the disciple of such an art. With the complete lack of historical sense characteristic of Alexandrinism, it entirely ignores such historical questions as that of the religious value of the Jewish worship, practise as it was or would still be according to the letter. Such a question could only excite interest in so far as it supplied the colours for the religious ideal to be depicted.

Professor Riehm has tried to prove that the leading theological ideas in Hebrews are of Palestinian origin—e.g. that of the Sabbath rest of the Children of Israel—but has stated the fundamental question wrongly, so that his lengthy work on the doctrinal ideas of Hebrews (1867) is no more than a sign of retrogression. We could not do our author

¹ viii. 7–ix. 12.² ἡ σκηνὴ ἢ ἀληθινή, viii. 2, and cf. ix. 24.³ ix. 11.⁴ ix. 1, x. 5, vi. 4, viii. 5, ix. 23.⁵ ix. 9.⁶ μέλλον αἰών, μέλλοντα ἀγαθά, and the like: vi. 5, ix. 11, x. 1, and xi. 20.⁷ vii. 3 and 24, x. 34, xii. 27; xiii. 14.⁸ x. i.

greater wrong than by bringing him into direct connection with the Christianity of the Primitive Apostles. Nowhere does he declare himself to be their disciple, least of all in ii. 3, where 'even οἱ ἀκούσαντες can scarcely refer exclusively to the Primitive Apostles,' and still less can the author alone be understood in ἡμᾶς. Only the eyes that are endowed with the power of searching the Apostolic world of thought in its other aspects also, can see that the mortal shape of Jesus was present to our author's mind quite otherwise than to that of Paul—in colours more vivid—and this precisely on the ground that he possessed the testimony of eye-witnesses. Are we to suppose that the fact mentioned in Hebrews xiii. 12, that the hill of Golgotha lay outside the gates of Jerusalem, was known only in Primitive Apostolic circles? The merit of Riehm's theory lies in its recognition of the fact that the incarnation of the Son of God and his sojourn on earth was of greater religious importance to the author than to Paul: yet this is not a sign of pre-Pauline thought, but of victory over Pauline one-sidedness. The theologian of the second Christian generation is seen throughout. In reality Hebrews is in its essential points further removed from the Primitive Apostles than Paul himself; its author thinks no longer of a settlement with Judaism; he knows of no prior rights of the Israelites under the New Covenant. The stress he lays upon sanctification, upon good works, and upon obedience, is not specifically primitive Apostolic; it is rather primitive *Catholic*.

Thus we willingly renounce the idea of finding a name for a great unknown; we can understand the Epistle and assign it an historical value, without knowing its gifted author by name. It is a document of post-Apostolic times, and to us it is almost pathetic, because it shows us one of the best men of those days labouring by means of the subtleties of his artificial theology to reanimate the spirit which was threatening to vanish from among the multitude; we see a representative of the ecclesiastical aristocracy then in progress of formation, impressed with the sense of each believer's responsibility for the rest¹; his work is the most living

¹ xii. 15.

protest we possess against the pietistic self-satisfaction of a collection of independent communities.

A state of spiritual indifference such as is combated by the writer's strong idealism might at one time or another have come over any community, and therefore the Epistle would from the very first day of its appearance, even if it was only intended for Rome or Puteoli, have been equally useful to other Christians. It has a right to dwell in the Canon, in spite of its Alexandrian subtleties, for through it there breathes something of the spirit of the first great age.

§ 13. *The Pastoral Epistles*

[H. A. W. Meyer, vol. xi.: Timothy and Titus by B. W. Weiss, 1893 (ed. 6); Hand-Commentar iii. 1: Col. Eph. Philem. Pastoral Epistles, by H. von Soden, 1893 (ed. 2). The best special commentary is that by H. J. Holtzmann (1880), which contains a great deal of information on the exegesis and criticism already applied to this subject. The monograph of F. H. Hesse, 'Die Entstehung der N.T. lichen Hirtenbriefe,' 1889, seeks to prove that the three Epistles were formed from a genuine Pauline foundation by recastings, by the additions of copyists, and above all by the incorporation of other canonical documents; but it has little method, and therefore little convincing power. Contributions to the discussion are to be found in F. Spitta's 'Zur Gesch. und Litt. d. Urchristenthums,' i. 1893, pp. 35-49, and A. Harnack's 'Die Chronologie der alchristlichen Litt.' i. 1897, pp. 480-5.]

1. For about a century, the name of Pastoral Epistles has been applied to the three letters which we find in the New Testament addressed to Timothy and Titus under the name of Paul, and containing instructions as to their pastoral labours among Christian communities; no objection can be raised against it.

The First Epistle to Timothy begins immediately after the address and greeting to speak of false teachers who dealt in mythologies, and who, while the Law was yet indispensable for sinners, represented a false antinomianism.¹ The idea that Paul would have been fully competent to deal with this

¹ i. 3-11.

subject (ὁ ἐπιστεύθη ἐγώ)¹ leads up to a thanksgiving to the mercy of God in having transformed him, once a blasphemer and a persecutor, into a minister of the Gospel for sinners.² This heritage with all its responsibilities, but also all its rights over those who fell away, he bequeathed to Timothy.³ To this he adds certain corresponding instructions: first, that wherever there were Christians prayers should be made for all men, including kings and rulers⁴—this being based on the universality of the divine decree of mercy—and then as to the manner in which men should pray and the demeanour proper for women both while praying and at other times.⁵ Here follows an enumeration of the conditions required for attaining the office of bishop,⁶ and then for that of deacon,⁷ while in conclusion emphasis is laid on the importance of these directions, since the House of God was in question—the pillar of truth⁸; in contemplating which the author breaks out into a hymn in praise of the great mystery of godliness and of Him who was manifested in the flesh. Chap. iv. is devoted to a description of the particular duties of Timothy: first, with regard to false doctrines of dualistic and ascetic tendency, which diverted attention from the main issue, viz. godliness⁹; and then touching his own personal conduct.¹⁰ Chap. v., too, begins with advice for his behaviour in his intercourse with the old and the young, and continues in apparently the same strain on the subject of the widows,¹¹ except that here the tone of the master directly addressing his disciple is once more replaced by that of the teacher of Canon Law, as in the passages about the elders¹² and about the duties of slaves.¹³ Between these last two, however, come three verses¹⁴ connected with what goes before by an association of ideas only to be explained as coming from certain definite experiences of the writer's; in them Timothy is charged for his health's sake even to take a little wine, and also to rest assured that in cases of sin as well as of good works everything would be brought to light. From here to

¹ Verse 11.² i. 12-17.³ i. 18-20.⁴ ii. 1-7.⁵ ii. 8-15.⁶ iii. 1-7.⁷ iii. 8-13.⁸ iii. 14 fol.⁹ iv. 1-10.¹⁰ iv. 11-16.¹¹ v. 3-16.¹² v. 17-22.¹³ vi. 1 and 2.¹⁴ v. 23-25.

the end¹ we have an earnest exhortation to hold fast in seriousness, truth and purity the wholesome word of Christ to the end of the world, heedless of the false teachers' strife of words. Vv. vi. 17-21 bear the marks of a later addition the first three containing rules for the rich, and the last a protest against 'so-called knowledge (gnosis).'

In the Second Epistle to Timothy the address and greeting are followed, as we are accustomed to find in Paul's Epistles by a thanksgiving and prayer, the latter to the effect that Timothy might, like Paul, in spite of all sufferings, continue in his steadfast faith and in sound doctrine.² After a few personal observations³ the thread of i. 14 is caught up again at chapter ii.; Timothy is exhorted to learn to wait steadfastly rejoicing in the battle, for the fruits of his labours, which could not fail to appear,⁴ and while holding aloof from heretical disputations and foolish hair-splittings, to work in a gentleness and virtue for the recovery of those who have been led astray.⁵ From iii. 1 to iv. 5 a more exact description is given of the various forms of these vessels of dishonour in the House of God—vessels which now, in the last days, must reveal themselves; it was for Timothy to fulfil the duties of his office towards them, in steadfastness and temperance following the teaching and the example of Paul and furnished completely with all sacred knowledge. Paul himself felt that he was nearing his end.⁶ Upon this a number of personal communications, charges and greetings⁷ lead up to the final blessing.

The Epistle to Titus, which is about half as long as the First Epistle to Timothy—the Second Epistle standing midway between the other two in this respect—has a somewhat longer superscription.⁸ First of all, the principles are laid down⁹ which were to govern the choice of the Elders, this being a particularly important point, because there existed a detestable heresy which had lately been making formidable progress.¹⁰ Vv. ii. 1-10 prescribe the manner in which

¹ vi. 3-16, for the doxology and Amen come at verse 16.

² i. 3-14.

³ i. 15-18.

⁴ ii. 1-13.

⁵ ii. 14-26.

⁶ iv. 6-8.

⁷ iv. 9-21.

⁸ i. 1-4 (cf. Rom. i. 1-7).

⁹ i. 5-9.

¹⁰ i. 10-19.

according to sound doctrine, the old men, the women, the young men and the slaves were to be treated: that is, what rules were specially to be impressed upon these respective classes, for God's mercy required a decided renunciation of worldly lusts from all alike.¹ Titus is then commanded to watch over his own authority, to see that obedience was rendered to rulers and to secure quiet living,² for with the regenerate³ good works must take the place of the old vices. Upon this follow a few short directions for his treatment of false teachers and schismatics,⁴ and then a few messages and greetings and the final blessing.

2. The most superficial glance at the contents of the three Epistles will be enough to demonstrate their close connection one with another. Just as they appeared at the same moment in history and have almost without exception stood side by side in the New Testament, so they mutually correspond in word and thought—perhaps even more remarkably than does Ephesians with Colossians. Hence they can only be examined in common, and we are led from the very outset to expect a common origin for all three. It is true that the first attempt at criticism on this domain was Schleiermacher's denial⁵ of the Pauline authorship of 1. Timothy alone, while later writers, too, have wished to consider 2. Timothy at least as authentic, although they have abandoned 1. Timothy and Titus. But more difficulties are hereby created than removed. The three Epistles are dominated but by one object—that of providing guarantees for the steady continuance of the Christian community-life upon a sound Apostolic basis. This was to be brought about, first, by a decided rejection of all false doctrine and schismatic tendency; secondly, by the establishment of strict rules of morality and discipline in all classes of the community, and, thirdly, by the intelligent and careful organisation of the clerical order—i.e. the offices and stations of honour—an institution which would be the means of doing most for both. The latter is dwelt upon least strongly in 2. Timothy, and most in 1.; the second finds expression most abundantly in Titus, while in 2. Timothy the personal

¹ ii. 11-14.² ii. 15-iii. 2.³ iii. 3-8 (cf. ii. 11-14).⁴ iii. 9-11.⁵ In 1807.

The points of contact between the Pastoral Epistles and the other books of the New Testament are not so numerous as to warrant us in maintaining that the relation between them is that of dependence; they are related to 1. Peter, as they are to 1. Clement, in their tone and phraseology, but a literary obligation need not necessarily have existed. We are often reminded in them of the Synoptic Gospels: compare, for instance, 1. Timothy ii. 6^a (ὁ δὸς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων) with Mark x. 45 (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν) and 1. Timothy v. 18 with Luke x. 7; here the logion 'The labourer is worthy of his hire' is quoted just as it stands in Luke as 'Scripture,' immediately after the words of Deuteronomy xxv. 4. But this must be due to a lapse of memory; at the time of the Pastoral Epistles no one would have treated Luke as *γραφὴ* in the same way as Deuteronomy. The author of 1. Timothy believed that this was a saying from the Old Testament such as that taken from Deuteronomy xxv., and indeed it has quite the Old Testament ring. We are not sufficiently familiar with the early history of the Synoptics to venture to assert that the author of the Pastoral Epistles had read *our* Gospels.

(b) The external evidence is not favourable to the authenticity of the Epistles. The earliest certain use of them is by Polycarp of Smyrna, and by the end of the second century we find them everywhere firmly established in the *Corpus Paulinarum*; but no more is proved by this than that the Pastoral Epistles existed in the first half of the second century and were warmly welcomed by the Church. It might be mere chance that neither the Epistle of Barnabas nor Justin contains the slightest reference to them; certainly they share this fate with other Epistles of Paul of undoubted authenticity. But of very real importance is the fact that Marcion the Gnostic (about 140 A.D.) did not include them in his Canon of Pauline Epistles, although he certainly admitted into it all writings which he had heard of *in the Church* under Paul's name; if, then, the Pastoral Epistles belonged to these, why should he have utterly ignored them, since he might easily have omitted what was inconvenient to him in their case as well as in that of the other Epistles? The reasons by which

he is said to have justified their exclusion from his Canon, to which he even admitted the short Epistle to Philemon, are purely fanciful. But if Marcion was not acquainted with the Pastoral Epistles at that time, we should conclude that they did not make their appearance until a period when the other ten were already enjoying a widespread circulation: in all probability after 100. This of course is not a sufficient proof of their spuriousness, but it makes us suspicious of the tradition.

(c) The first of the main arguments against their authenticity is afforded by their language. The number of *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα* is not so much the question, for that words like *πολυτελής*¹ or *οἰκουργός*² are not to be found in Paul's writings proves no more than does the fact that *όλόκληρος* and *όλοτελής* are only used by Paul in 1. Thessalonians.³ It is more worthy of notice that in the Pastoral Epistles such everyday words as *προσέχειν τινί*, *ἀρνεῖσθαι* and *ὠφέλιμος* are met with five, six and four times respectively, but never in Paul's Epistles nor in the rest of the New Testament; or that instead of the thoroughly Pauline *ἐπιθυμία* we here find *ἡδονή*,⁴ sometimes compounded with *φίλος*, *φιλήδονοι*,⁵ to form a word very characteristic of these Epistles. But the fact that brings conviction is that many words which were indispensable to Paul are absent from the Pastoral Epistles: e.g. particles like *ἄρα*, *διό*, *διότι*; whole families of words like *περισσός* with all its compounds (elsewhere only absent in Philemon and 2. Thessalonians); likewise *καυχᾶσθαι* (elsewhere occurring everywhere but in Colossians and Philemon), and, still more, *ἐνεργεῖν*. The word *σῶμα*, which Paul uses so extremely abundantly, only appears here once in the form *σωματική*.⁶ On the other hand, the Pastoral Epistles make the most liberal use of the words *σώφρων*, *σωφρόνως*, *σωφρονεῖν*, *σωφρονίζεῖν*, *σωφρονισμός* and *σωφροσύνη*, whereas with Paul *σωφρονεῖν* alone occurs but twice. Still more striking is the preference for the stem *διδάσκειν* in all sorts of combinations and derivatives—even *διδασκτικός*, which occurs only in 1. and 2. Timothy⁷ in the

¹ 1. Tim. ii. 9.² Titus ii. 5.³ v. 23.⁴ Titus iii. 3.⁵ 2. Tim. iii. 4.⁶ 1. Tim. iv. 8.⁷ 1. Tim. iii. 2. 2. Tim. ii. 24.

whole of the New Testament—while the words *εὐσεβῶς*, *εὐσεβεία*, *εὐσεβεῖν* may be found thirteen times here and not once in Paul's Epistles. Nor can it be accidental that *καλός* may be met with twenty-four times in the Pastoral Epistles alone and only sixteen times in the ten Pauline Epistles; and while Paul uses it almost exclusively as a substantive—*τὸ καλόν*, *καλά*, *καλόν ἐστίν*—it occurs twenty times as an adjective in the Pastoral Epistles, especially with *ἔργα*.¹

But neither does the style in general remind us in the least of Paul, whether we compare it with Ephesians, or 1. Thessalonians, or Romans. The constructions are simple, the ideas expressed without ornament (for word-plays like *φιλήδονοι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι*² can scarcely be classed as ornaments); nowhere is there a trace of the Pauline swing and energy, and we hardly ever come across an anacoluthon, a break in the construction, or an ambiguity caused by the rush of hurrying ideas: all is regular and smooth in the Pastoral Epistles, but all is also without force or colour. Their words are many and their ideas few; of Paul one might say exactly the opposite.

Attempts have been made to weaken this argument by reminding us that what we have here are private letters in which the writer would naturally express himself with less restraint than he would in what might be called an official epistle—a letter addressed to a community. I doubt, however, whether this differentiation would apply in Paul's case; he did not consider himself to be more 'official' in his Epistle to the Philippians than he did when he was writing to Philemon or to his friend Timothy; but even if it were so nothing would be gained for the Pastoral Epistles, for such difference could only apply to the tone and the manner, not to the very materials of the language. Blass, the 'philologist' does not consider it astonishing 'that Paul should write to his disciples and assistants in a different manner—i.e. in a more lofty style—than to the churches.' Are we to suppose, then, that Blass himself writes letters to his friends and pupils in a more lofty style than he bestows on the grammar-prefaces and historical sketches which he produces for the

¹ This occurs four times in Titus alone.

² 2. Tim. iii. 4.

common herd? And in what sense of the word can the style of 1. Timothy be considered more lofty than, for instance, that of 2. Corinthians 3-5? It may be neater, but is a neater style the same thing as a more lofty one? Still more unfortunate, perhaps, is the suggestion that Paul's style might have undergone a change, that as he grew old he might have lost some of the animation once peculiarly his own, might have been influenced by many things, even the vocabulary of his opponents. Surely it is more than improbable that this influence should only have begun to exert itself so late, and should have extended to the use of particles and whole groups of related words which have nothing whatever to do with theology. Moreover, Paul was an old man when he wrote Philemon and Philippians, yet why should these traces of senility be absent from them? And who can believe that Paul, whom we have studied as a letter-writer throughout a whole decade and have always found substantially the same, should suddenly after another two or three years have undergone so complete a change? The style of Ephesians might perhaps be described as tinged with traces of senility; but to credit Paul with a change of style from that of Galatians and Corinthians through the more wordy obscurity of Colossians and Ephesians to the smooth commonplace of the Pastoral Epistles, is surely a little too much. Let writers with such theories of style-development examine the earliest and latest works of Tertullian or Athanasius from that point of view—of men who were exposed to outside influences from reading and controversy at least as much as Paul—and then see whether they discover such differences there as exist between Romans and 1. Timothy!

(d) As to an intentional appropriation of phrases from the enemy's camp, this would be least incredible in the case of formulæ bearing on a different world of thought: as when the Pastorals so frequently speak of the *good* or the *clean* conscience (expressions which do not occur in Paul's Epistles), or when stress is laid upon the *sound* word of doctrine (*ὑγιής* or *ὑγιαίνων*), again without parallel in Paul. Expressions like *λογομαχεῖν*¹ or *λογομαχαί*² might, of

¹ 2. Tim. ii. 14.

² 1. Tim. vi. 4.

course, have been coined by Paul at any moment for use against a particular form of theological propaganda. But what could have induced the Apostle absolutely to discard the words most characteristic of his thought, i.e. his favourite ideas, like that of 'putting on' (Christ, or the 'new man,' etc.) or of 'revelation' (ἀποκάλυψις and ἀποκαλύπτειν)? And are we to suppose that Paul further owed to his adversaries his unusual use of πίστις (faith)? For the words ἐν πίστει are met with here nine times in the most varied connections, while in the other ten Epistles they occur but thrice, and even then only coupled with the verbs ζῆν, εἶναι and στήκειν. These things alone could only be explained on the assumption that the writer was a man whose ways of thought were other than Paul's; but the fundamental conceptions and the whole attitude of the Pastoral Epistles are different from those of Paul. I do not mean that importance should be attached to small contradictions, such as that a mediator should be spoken of in Galatians² as something of a relatively low order, while in 1. Timothy³ Christ is solemnly extolled as 'mediator between God and men,' nor can there be any question here of a peculiar non-Pauline theology like that of Hebrews. The author of the Pastoral Epistles was certainly not conscious of deviating in the smallest particular from his revered Apostle, and innovations in doctrine, as we know, he hated with all his soul.

But in this dread of theological contention, and even of speculation of any kind,⁴ in this accentuation of a simple holding fast and propagation of the tradition,⁵ in the striking emphasis laid upon the practical duties of Christians and in the moralising character of our Epistles, a different spirit is shown from that of Paul—the spirit of the Afterborn. Faith of which he cannot speak often enough, has changed to orthodoxy; it now means the recognition of and unswerving adherence to fundamental religious facts, such as that of the unity of God,⁶ the universality of the divine decree of mercy,

¹ E.g., 1. Tim. i. 4, 'the dispensation of God which is in faith.'

² iii. 19 fol.

³ ii. 5.

⁴ 2. Tim. ii. 23, and 1. Tim. vi. 4. ⁵ E.g., 2. Tim. i. 13 fol., and ii. 2.

⁶ 1. ii. .

⁷ ii. 4, 6.

the fulfilment of the same through Jesus Christ, whose mortal nature is just as strongly dwelt upon as his subsequent glorification,¹ and the equal balance of labour and reward.² It is true that we still hear of a calling,³ of the elect,⁴ of the Divine purpose and grace (*πρόθεσις καὶ χάρις*) which was given us from everlasting in Christ Jesus⁵ as the only ground of our salvation (*οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν*); but who could extract from these bald formulæ anything of the dauntless force of the belief in Predestination which is to be found in Romans viii. 28 fol.? According to the Pastoral Epistles, salvation is fore-ordained to the believers, the righteous, the pure. According to Paul, the individual believers are fore-ordained to salvation. The Anti-Judaism of Paul, which was wholly a matter of principle, has here become one of persons. In Titus i. 10 *οἱ ἐκ τῆς περιτομῆς*, 'they of the circumcision,' are treated as contemptuously as are their prescriptions for purification—founded nevertheless on the law of Moses—which are called 'Jewish fables and commandments of men.' This was the judgment of the early Catholic Church, but not of Paul. In the Pastoral Epistles we find a uniform reflection of the average Christianity of the second century, although one peculiarly rich in reminiscences of Pauline doctrine; even the Creed appears already fixed in definite formulæ,⁶ and it is assumed as a matter of course that each baptised Christian has testified to his faith before the community, in the recognised form.

But most instructive of all will be a glance at the eschatology of the Epistles. The true Paul allowed his ideas about the Last Things to vary a good deal, but still a conviction of the near approach of the Last Day was always a mighty force within him, and the hope that he might himself live to see the return of the Lord never wholly left him. The thought that it might be necessary to make lasting provision for a continued existence of the Church on earth, would have been inconceivable to him. But in the Pastoral Epistles the situation is completely changed. The presentiment of death in 2. Tim. iv. 6 may here be left out of account. Men were

¹ 1. iii. 16.² 2. ii. 5 fol.³ 2. Tim. i. .⁴ 2. Tim. ii. 10.⁵ 2. Tim. i. 9.⁶ 1. Tim. ii. 5 fol., iii. 16, vi. 13; 2. Tim. ii. 8.

the side of panegyric,' and from this he deduces the folly of the hypothesis that a pseudo-Paul should in 1. and 2. Timothy have made this caricature of the Timothy whom the genuine Paul praised so highly in his Epistles. But the pseudo-Paul's need for panegyric is amply satisfied in the words of praise devoted to Paul himself,¹ and even in the case of Timothy it obtains its due in vv. i. 4 fol. and iii. 10 of the Second Epistle. The unpleasing traits in the picture of Timothy and Titus are demanded by the parts assigned to them, for the detailed instructions which the author pretends to possess from Apostolic lips would only have been needed by men who were not yet quite familiar with their task. Again, the number of his friends who have fallen away and turned traitors serves, on the one hand, to make the lonely greatness of the Apostle, still unforsaken by his God, shine forth with yet purer glory; and, on the other, it provides a motive for the lively anxiety with which he gives advice and warnings of so minute and pressing a nature. But, not least, we find in it a reflection of the experiences of the unknown author himself: the untrustworthiness, the weakmindedness, the lack of clearness of those who wished to be leaders and examples, appeared to him as the canker gnawing at the roots of the Christianity of his times. Hebrews fully prepares us for such judgments in a Christian writing twenty years later. But can we believe that the men who helped Paul and his Gospel to conquer the world, who restored his authority in communities of which he almost despaired, and who did not hesitate to risk their necks for his life—such men as Titus, Timothy, Aquila, or Demas—can we believe that these were such miserably timid, self-seeking and small-minded men as Zahn would have us to think, in order that he may save the genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles? We must judge Paul by his disciples, for he had had ten years in which to train them; if they were so immature as would appear from the Pastoral Epistles, he certainly had not finished his course of instruction!

Moreover, if Paul had been with both Timothy and Titus shortly before writing 1. Timothy and Titus respectively² and had then appointed them their tasks, why should he do so

¹ E.g., 2. Tim. iii. 10 fol. ² 1. Tim. i. 3; Titus i. 5.

again so soon, in spite of the fact that he was looking forward to a speedy re-union with them? ¹ 1. Tim. iii. 15 shows that the writer himself felt how unnatural this was, though he was unable to avoid it. Why is there not in 1. Timothy a single word of advice specially intended for Ephesus, with which Paul was so intimately acquainted, and why does he give Titus so detailed a picture of the Cretan heretics, whom the latter must surely have known best himself, while at the same moment destroying the possible utility of the information by bidding him leave Crete? Contradictory things of this sort will never be explained on the supposition that the real Paul was writing to real fellow-labourers about the real circumstances of his time, but only by assuming that a later writer had created an artificial situation out of which he made the Apostle issue directions to certain famous community-leaders of former times. It is also significant to note that he can only picture the companions of Paul as chattels always at the disposal of the Apostolic Prince of the Church, a band from among whom the latter regularly appointed the leaders, the important personages, the Apostolic vicars, of the newly founded communities.

(f) Similar difficulties arise when we attempt to find a place for the Epistles during the life of Paul—especially since, considering their close connection, only one period of Paul's life is possible, and that *after* the composition of the other Epistles. Let us see what they themselves have to tell us as to the circumstances under which they were written.

According to 1. Timothy i. 3, Paul had recently been working together with Timothy at Ephesus, but had now, leaving the latter behind to contend against the false brethren, gone on to Macedonia, in the confident hope of a speedy return.² From this we conclude that the Apostle was a free man, and we might be inclined to think of the particular moment in the so-called Third Missionary Journey when after a three years' sojourn in Ephesus he was forced to leave the city and went up through Troas to Macedonia, were it not, unfortunately, that according to 2. Corinthians this was done in company with Timothy and certainly not in the

¹ 1. Tim. iii. 14; Titus iii. 12.

² 1. Tim. iii. 14 and iv. 13.

hope of a speedy return. The Epistle to Titus Paul also wrote as a free man, surrounded by many companions¹; he had recently been with Titus in Crete, and had left him behind to organise the new communities; but now he writes to him to come with all speed, as soon as Artemas or Tychicus should have arrived, to Nicopolis (probably in Epirus), where he was intending to pass the winter.² The temper alone of 1. Timothy is sufficient to show that it could not have been composed immediately after the Ephesian catastrophe. It might rather be assigned to an excursion which—with as much probability as that second journey to Corinth³ also not mentioned in the Acts—Paul might have made a year or two before from Ephesus to Macedonia. But then the Epistle would have to be placed *before* 2. Cor. and Romans and to be divided by a long interval from 2. Timothy, and this is impossible. Paul might certainly have *planned* a winter in Nicopolis during his last journey through Macedonia—possibly before he had received tidings as to the effect of 2. Cor.—though, of course, the *execution* of the plan need not be taken for granted; but that does not help us with the Epistle to Titus, because Paul touched at Crete for the first time considerably later, during his journey to Rome. If this had ever been preceded by a fruitful activity upon the island, the eye-witness who wrote the report beginning at Acts xxvii. 7 would certainly have mentioned it. And moreover the bringing in of several otherwise unattested acts is in itself suspicious.

In 2. Timothy we find that Paul is a prisoner in Rome,⁴ conscious, according to iv. 6–8, that he is nearing his end. In iv. 16 he says that ‘at his first defence all had forsaken him’; the impudent opposition of Alexander the copper-smith, too, had since then offended him deeply (iv. 14); all that were in Asia had turned away from him (i. 15). But he had in the mean time received much loving-kindness; the fugitives, with the exception of Demas,⁵ seem to have returned to him for a time, but just now only Luke was with him,⁶ while Titus was in Dalmatia and Crescens in Gaul. Paul wishes⁷ to have Timothy, as well as

¹ iii. 15.² iii. 12.³ See pp. 92–94.⁴ i. 16 fol.⁵ iv. 10.⁶ iv. 11.⁷ i. 4.

Mark,¹ with him shortly,² before the winter had set in.³ Where Timothy was staying at the time we are not definitely told, but it could not very well have been far from Troas, since he was to bring with him thence the famous cloak and books (and this to one who was daily expecting his end!)⁴; in fact, in spite of the words 'Tychicus I sent unto Ephesus'⁵ and of verse i. 15, our thoughts would, according to i. 18 and iv. 19, and as in 1. Timothy, turn to Ephesus. Zahn prefers Iconium or Lystra—a holiday resort of the evangelist, who had grown weary at home. The Epistle might quite well have been written during the Roman imprisonment, but in that case before Philemon, Colossians and Philippians, for when they were composed Timothy and Mark were both with Paul and had been sharing his sufferings for some time. Above all, it is evident that Timothy here receives accurate information for the first time concerning Paul's imprisonment. But here again it is strange that Paul should calmly have left the cloak in Troas for several years, especially if, with the Acts, we assign the duration of the Cæsarean imprisonment to two years; while the remarks of iv. 20, that Erastus had remained at Corinth and Trophimus had been left behind at Miletus sick, sound more than ever as though this had taken place quite recently, in fact during the last Collection-journey, in which Trophimus, according to Acts xx. 4, had taken part. Timothy, however, had also taken part in it, so what would be the object of describing these proceedings to him over again?

The career of Tychicus, too, becomes an absolute riddle. Not only do we find that before Paul's arrest the latter had sent him to Crete—or intended to do so⁶—and had then taken him with him to Jerusalem,⁷ but that after his imprisonment he sent him according to 2. Timothy⁸ to Ephesus, and according to Colossians⁹ and Ephesians¹⁰ to Colossæ and other neighbouring communities. But these two, in spite of the proximity of their destinations, are incompatible as one and the same mission, since in the one case Paul was almost

¹ iv. 11.² iv. 9.³ iv. 21.⁴ iv. 13.⁵ iv. 12.⁶ Tit. iii. 12.⁷ Acts xx. 4.⁸ iv. 12.⁹ iv. 7.¹⁰ vi. 21.

deserted and longed for the arrival of Timothy, and in the other both Timothy and several other companions were at his side. Even if we allow that Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians were written from Cæsarea, this would mean that Tychicus had for years been travelling about unceasingly at Paul's behest!

In order to avoid these difficulties and to keep the Epistles close together, a convenient hypothesis has been put forward. It creates a period in the life of Paul of which we have no other knowledge whatever—none, therefore, which would interfere with the utterances of the Pastoral Epistles—a period which may equally well include free activity in Ephesus and Epirus, Macedonia and Crete, and close confinement with the prospect of death. For such a period the only place left in the life of Paul would be *after* those two years which he spent in Rome in a state of semi-confinement¹; he must then have been set free, but after a short time have been imprisoned in Rome once more, and then, but not till then, have been executed. Of the objections which the course herein assumed by the argument raises in the highest degree—of the importance of the fact that the Acts certainly knew of no liberation of the Apostle, and of the lack of trustworthy evidence for this so-called second Roman imprisonment—it is unnecessary to speak further.²

But in no case can 2. Timothy iv. 16–18 serve as a foundation for this castle in the air. From the words of the text no one would guess that the 'first defence' signifies the same thing as the first imprisonment, or that the delivery out of the mouth of the lion was identical with an acquittal by the imperial tribunal. We are compelled to conceive this triumph of the Apostle as a moral and religious one, both from the statement of its end and aim in verse 17 and the parallel passage in verse 18, 'The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom.' Paul can assure his pupil that, when before the tribunal, he had defended the Gospel with power and had as yet checkmated the Devil, although relying only on himself and on his God. The second imprisonment theory owes its

¹ Acts xxviii. 30.

² See pp. 42 fol.

the opinion of non-Christians¹ is also distinctive. The best spirits in the Christian world saw with sorrow that the vice and frivolity of their fellow-believers were doing most serious harm to the Gospel; the secularisation of Christianity was proceeding apace. True, this did not begin everywhere at the same time, nor is the date at which a hierarchical organisation first came into being distinctly determinable, but in neither case can we take our stand too near the Apostolic Age.

The description of the false brethren combated in the Pastoral Epistles agrees with this assignment—namely, to the third or fourth generation A.D. Even if there were no direct mention in 1. Timothy vi. 20 of the ‘knowledge which is falsely so called,’ there could be no doubt that these heretics—who, in the author’s experience, had already caused much mischief in the Church, and from whom he feared still more—were Gnostics. Everything in the writer’s theology that is at all tangible is anti-Gnostic in tone; 1. Timothy ii. 4 and 6 sound like a protest against the Gnostic division of mankind into two or three classes, one of which, that of the slaves of Matter (Hylicists), was absolutely excluded from salvation; the extravagant respect for tradition, again, and the anti-Docetic utterances all point in the same direction. But the Gnostics may be recognised still more distinctly from the positive information supplied by the Pastoral Epistles as to the behaviour of the heretics. Whether they were Greeks or quondam Jews,² they vaunted themselves upon their myths of subtle meaning and their endless genealogies,³ and imposed upon men by their skill in reasoning and their capacity for continually setting up and solving fresh problems. These newfangled teachers of the Law used it for idle speculations, instead of for the confirmation of Christian knowledge,⁴ or appealed to it without the least conception of its true interpretation, in order to enforce the commandments of men⁵—the prohibition of marriage, of the drinking of wine and

¹ 1. Tim. iii. 7, v. 14; Titus ii. 5.

² Titus i. 10 and 14.

³ 1. Tim. i. 4.

⁴ 1. Tim. i. 7; 2. iii. 15-17.

⁵ Titus i. 14.

the eating of meat¹—and denied the idea of a future resurrection² on the ground that the true resurrection had already taken place, at any rate among the ‘sons of knowledge.’

Now, it is true that in the aggregate these features do not all apply to any single Gnostic system, such as that of Basilides or of Marcion, but we know numerous Gnostic systems only by name, and the writer has no desire to discuss the individual doctrines of any one system minutely. He confines himself in dealing with this poison mainly to an allusive treatment. Perhaps he knew that the false teaching was advancing to the assault from the most diverse quarters; but every variety was alike worthy of condemnation. We should be fundamentally mistaken as to the position of the Pastoral Epistles if we pressed these false teachers rigidly into three classes: the evil and hopeless men of the last times, against whom the author only wished to prepare his readers; the blasphemers of the present, who were already excommunicate; and the *ἐτεροδιδασκαλοῦντες* within the Church, recommended to the watchful discipline of the vicars—a comparatively harmless class, which had merely lost sight of the serious morality of Christianity in its fondness for rabbinical or ascetic fancies. Although these false teachers may be somewhat shadowy figures to us, they need not have been so to the author's contemporaries. Nor must we forget that the writer was bound to maintain the rôle of Paul, and therefore can only utter his warnings in the form of prophecy. For this very reason he cannot be over-precise in his outlines. Now, it was only in the second century that this struggle for existence between subjectivism and the true and wholesome doctrine, the Apostolic tradition, became the chief concern of the Church, just as the rigid organisation of the Church became closely bound up with the same movement. Granted that the writer of the Pastoral Epistles was one who actively participated in such a struggle, one who, realising the danger, did not hesitate, in self-defence, to employ the doubtful weapon of supposititious Pauline Epistles, these Epistles could only have been written after the year 100. And taking

¹ 1. Tim. iv. 3, v. 23.

² 2. Tim. ii. 18.

the external evidence into account, we should fix upon the first quarter of the second century.

As to the writer's place of abode it is best to abstain from all conjecture. Many have suggested Rome, basing their suggestion on occasional Latinisms in the language; but these have little significance, and there is no other local colouring. The author must certainly have belonged to the ministry, and it is probable that he may even have been born of Christian parents,¹ but there is no evidence whatsoever to show that he was of Jewish extraction.²

5. The idea of imparting advice and warning to Christendom in the name of Paul probably came to our unknown author from observation of the exasperating fact that the false teachers sometimes claimed the authority of Paul for their vain doctrine, and sometimes treated it with open contempt. This is the reason why he lays so much stress, now on the Apostolic rights of Paul, and now on the fact that his message contained nothing but the plain Gospel received direct from the Son of God appearing in flesh as the Saviour of sinners. His object was to make the true Paul give his opinion unmistakably on the false Paulinists as well as on the outspoken Anti-Paulinists. To the question why the author made Paul write to Timothy and Titus rather than to anyone else, we might answer: because his object was to furnish admonitions in the Apostle's name to the *heads* of the Church, and for such a part the best known of his trusted comrades were the most suitable; they were at once Paul's disciples, whom he could teach and counsel in fatherly tones, and his trusted followers, whom he could endue with Apostolic authority to establish discipline and order in Gentile communities. It is far more difficult to answer the further question: why the anonymous author drew up three epistles when one would have sufficed, and in what order he composed the three. We may venture the conjecture that from the first he intended to produce more than one epistle, and perhaps chose the number three to begin with; if Paul communicated the same instructions from different situations, to different men, working in entirely different provinces, the

¹ 2. Tim. i. 3, iii. 15.

² See Titus i. 10, *ὅτι ἐκ τῆς περιουσίας*.

weight of his utterance would be effectively increased. There is no doubt would remain that Paul had laid down binding laws for the whole Church and for all times. With regard to the order in which they were written, we may reasonably assert that 1. Timothy and Titus display the closest connection; 2. Timothy might rather be called the author's trump-card, by which he made the dying Apostle hand over his last will and testament to a successor in the ministry. This is a situation which would naturally call forth tender as well as harsher tones. Moreover, on this supposition we should behold the writer's powers increasing before our eyes for in 2. Timothy he certainly approaches most nearly to the real Epistles of Paul in expression, thought and attitude.

This observation, again, leads up to another hypothesis, viz. that genuine Pauline material may have been incorporated in the Pastoral Epistles—notes or fragments of the Apostle's letters to those two friends. To a lively fancy, Hymenæus, Alexander and Philetus¹ may appear as 'figures of flesh and blood'; and indeed the personal references in 2. Timothy i. 15, 18 and iv. 9-18, 19-21, and in Titus iii. 12, 15, have little or no connection with the main tendencies of the Epistles. It is suggested that Paul's request in 2. Timothy iv. 13 sounds too simple to have been invented, and large portions of 2. Timothy² or Titus³ contain no teaching which, regarded by itself, would surprise us as coming from the mouth of Paul. The critics have therefore set to work with much zeal to extract the authentic parts, even down to individual words and syllables, from the existing Pastoral Epistles, and have then pieced these together with great skill to form two, three and even more genuine Epistles of Paul, perfect and unimpaired. On the other hand, Harnack, who also believes in some such genuine foundation underlying the Pastoral Epistles, has discovered yet a third hand in the present text. He thinks that about the year 150 some scribe interpolated the portions of 1. Timothy⁴ and Titus⁵ concerning the discipline of the Church, as well as the ending of 1. Timothy,⁶ with the warning against Marcion's 'Antitheses.'

¹ 1. Tim. i. 20; 2. Tim. ii. 17.

² E.g., i. 7-12, and ii. 3-13.

³ iii. 1-8. ⁴ iii. 1-13 and parts of chapter v. ⁵ i. 7-9. ⁶ vi. 17-21.

I cannot accept either of these hypotheses. We must of course take care not to assert that the employment of genuine fragments by the nameless author, or the interpolation of later additions into his own work, was impossible in itself; but the impression of unity given by the whole, especially of the close connection originally existing between all the parts referring to the discipline of the Church, in my opinion outweighs the force of the arguments brought forward in favour of a division of the material among several authors, one writing about the year 60, one about 110, and one about 150. The author brought forward these numerous names and facts (which are to be found especially in 2. Timothy and Titus) of set purpose, in order to give his work the closest possible connection with the genuine Pauline Epistles; he obtained his materials in part from the collection of Epistles accessible to him as to us, and from the Acts; in part he added to them by free invention, in the manner to be exhibited soon afterwards in the 'Acts of Paul.' Here he would, of course, make occasional allusions—which we are naturally unable to follow—to personal matters and occurrences of the moment. 2. Timothy iv. 9-18 is intended (and successfully) to awaken the sympathy of the reader with the disillusioned, lonely, poverty-stricken Apostle, deprived even of his books, to arouse admiration for his strength and thereby to increase the effect of his former warnings. The entreaty to Timothy to come quickly,¹ recurring in the middle of the messages of greeting, is well calculated to represent the pathetic longing of the man. The other passages which bear the mark of Paul's style are successful imitations; the skill with which, if genuine, the anonymous author must be credited for working them up into his own material is at least as remarkable as that which their simple invention would have entailed. However, even there he is not quite Paul; but no one can doubt his wish to be Paul, and Paul alone, in these Epistles. Those who consider it an axiom that Pseudepigrapha are only the work of fools who betray the forger with every word, have no resource but to cast off or to conceal all doubts as to the genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles. But it does not surprise

¹ iv. 19-21.

me, considering the extraordinarily fine perception sometimes displayed by the author of the Acts in the discourses he puts into the mouth of his hero, corresponding as they do to his individuality and to the given situation, that another Christian, whose work was made so much more easy by his long study of the ten Pauline Epistles, should not long afterwards¹ have undertaken to write epistles in Paul's name to secure the welfare of the distressed Church—epistles in which the public of that time found Paul again, complete as they pictured him, the Apostle of the true faith and the champion of morality and order in all the churches. The skill of the unknown writer—although, to my mind, somewhat premeditated—deserved its success, because it was not self-seeking. The Church accepted without question the 'word of Paul' of which she stood in so much need, and she rewarded the Pseudo-Paul for his work by speedily including his productions in the collection of the Apostolic Epistles, although for force of intellect and wealth of ideas they can endure no comparison with the genuine Pauline Epistles or with the Epistle to the Hebrews.

¹ About 110.

In spite of the fact that according to the superscriptions these Epistles are divided among four authors—one being assigned to James and one to Jude, two to Peter, and three to John—all of them, that is, to men of the earliest Apostolic circles—there yet exist numerous points of relationship between them. Above all they have this peculiarity in common, that their contents, taken as a whole, even though the addresses may, as in 2. and 3. John, seem to deny it, concern the Church in general; they lack the personal stamp, and necessities universally felt are met by them with counsel universal in tone. Ephesians, Hebrews and the Pastoral Epistles no doubt form the transition to this class of epistle, but the individuality of the letter-writer and the peculiarities of the epistle here retire still further into the background: the epistle is merely the literary form in which the unknown writer holds intercourse with an unknown public, and one might almost say that this form was then the fashion of the moment, were it not that its approved value, realised through the beneficent influence of the Pauline heritage, was evidently the cause of its retention. The authors of the Catholic Epistles—and we need not suppose that they devoted very much reflection to it—simply wrote epistles because they already possessed the letters of ‘the Apostle,’ and this already implies that these epistles can only have sprung from post-Pauline times, and therefore not from any of the Primitive Apostles.

They are all of trifling bulk—Jude and 2. and 3. John quite short, about the same length as Philemon; James, 1. Peter and 1. John, which are all of about equal length, a little longer than Colossians, and 2. Peter not much longer than 2. Thessalonians. Not one of these writers engages in far-reaching trains of thought or searching investigations; the Epistles contain little theology, but all the more practical advice for the life of the Christian and of the Church, together with much edifying exhortation in the epistolary form, the ideas loosely strung together. The modest proportion here maintained between the value and the extent of the subject-matter, must have decidedly assisted their circulation and recognition; epistles like the 1st and 2nd of Clement and the Epistle of Barnabas would on account of their length have

had much greater difficulty in establishing themselves in all communities, even though they had been ticketed with the names of Apostolic authors. Moreover, the history of the reception of the Catholic Epistles¹ at once leads us to consider that they represent the product of a later time than that of the ten Pauline Epistles; only 1. John and 1. Peter were considered Canonical writings as early as the second century, while 2. John, Jude and 3. John followed slowly from the year 200 onwards, and James and 2. Peter hardly appeared at all before the third century.

§ 15. *The First Epistle of Peter*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. xii.: 'Briefe Petri und Judae,' by E. Kuhl, 1897 (ed. 6); Hand-Commentar iii. 2; Hebrews, 1. and 2. Peter, James and Jude, by H. von Soden, 1899 (ed. 3). The monograph of J. M. Usteri (1887) is full and well-reasoned in matters of exegesis, but too strongly biased in questions of criticism by a desire to uphold the authenticity of the Epistles. See also Ad. Harnack: 'Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur,' i. 451-465 (1. Peter); 465-470 (Jude and 2. Peter). Against Harnack's hypothesis as to 1. Peter see W. Wrede in the 'Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft,' i. pp. 75-85.]

1. A sharp distinction exists between the body of the Epistle, on the one hand, and, on the other, the address and greeting and the conclusion,² with salutations and blessing. To divide this body into its separate members is a difficult business; and an arrangement decided on by the author himself is undiscoverable, because it never existed.

Verses i. 3-12 form an introduction, not unlike those of the Pauline Epistles, consisting in praise to God that he had caused those to whom the Epistle was addressed to be born anew to the living hope, in a glorious salvation not to be dimmed by any suffering. Upon this follows the first and larger part,³ hortative in tone, and consisting in an injunction to the readers to live holy lives in accordance with this new birth and living hope, freed from all the old vices

¹ See Part II.

² v. 12-14.

³ i. 13-ii. 10.

and active in brotherly love, and to grow as God's people in communion with Christ, the living corner-stone. The second part¹ gives more particular directions as to the line of conduct to be pursued towards the Gentiles and towards those in authority, by slaves towards their masters—and here follows a digression upon the suffering of Christ as our example²—by women towards their husbands and by men towards their wives, and finally by every man towards his fellow-believers. This is followed by a passage³ in which meekness and patience in suffering are very earnestly enjoined, and the sufferings of Christ with their blessings both to the living and the dead are called to mind; here, too, occur the famous sentences about Christ's 'descent into Hell.'⁴ The third part, from iv. 7 to v. 11, is that with least inner cohesion. The writer begins⁵ with urging his readers not to forget *prayer* and *love*, since the end was drawing near, for in them each individual could serve the community; then⁶ he bids them see that they suffered not as evil-doers but only as *Christians*, whereby suffering was turned into joy. Then he appeals to the elders to discharge their duty towards the flock with unselfish faithfulness, and likewise to the young men to perform theirs with humility towards the old.⁷ The closing verses⁸ contain a final exhortation to all to march on humbly towards eternal glory, prepared, in these evil times, for battle with the devil, and full of trust in God.

2. If no more than the address and ending of the Epistle had been preserved, there might certainly be some difference of opinion as to its object. According to v. 12, the author meant to exhort his readers briefly and to declare to them that that wherein they were established was the true grace of God. According to i. 1, the author is the Apostle Peter, and the readers are the Christians of 'Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.' They are solemnly proclaimed 'the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion'; and here our thoughts naturally turn to Jewish Christians, since Peter, as we know,⁹ held the Apostolate of the circumcision. Did Peter, then, wish to

¹ ii. 11-iv. 6.² ii. 21-25.³ iii. 13-iv. 6.⁴ iii. 19-21, iv. 6.⁵ iv. 7-11.⁶ iv. 12-19.⁷ v. 1-5.⁸ v. 6-11.⁹ Gal. ii. 8.

confirm them in that form of the Gospel which he had brought them, or had caused his disciples¹ to bring them—perhaps in opposition to the enticements of Paul towards an abandonment of the Law? But no, this is impossible, for according to i. 14, 18, ii. 9 fol. and iv. 3 fol. the addressees are converted Gentiles, and from this it would appear that the title in the address should be understood figuratively. The Christians in these five provinces, as elsewhere, were merely sojourners upon the earth, pilgrims² without the rights of citizens³ and they are called ‘the Dispersion’ simply because they were isolated, without country, few in number⁴ and scattered among immense majorities of unbelievers. But the Gentile Christian communities of Galatia and Asia owed their Christianity to Paul; must we, then, suppose that in v. 12 Peter wished to testify that their Pauline Gospel was true and divine—unless indeed, on the principles of the Tübingen school, we take the view that a later writer was attempting in this way to demonstrate the unanimity between Peter and Paul in the interests of the party of union. Such intentions as these, however, have simply been imported into the Epistle; nowhere do we find a comparison between the heritage entrusted to the readers and that delivered to Peter nor is the remark in verse v. 12 intended to furnish the key to the Epistle, as though its contents could not be understood without it, but has exactly the same value as Hebrews xiii. 24: ‘Accept our word of exhortation and our testimony.’ The readers needed such exhortation because their faith, their obedience, their advance in sanctification was now in peril the trial of manifold temptations had overwhelmed them⁵ and therefore it could not be impressed upon them too strongly that even though faith were attended with shame and suffering it was nevertheless the purest grace.

Every word of the Epistle is directed towards encouraging and strengthening the readers in the face of persecution and suffering: they were not on that account to lose sight of the great hope or to fall back exhausted into the old ways, na-

¹ i. 12, 25.

² Cf. also i. 17 and ii. 11.

³ Cf. Heb. xiii. 14.

⁴ iii. 20; cf. the *ἐκλεκτοὶ διασπορᾶς* of Matt. xxii. 14.

⁵ Mentioned as early as i. 6.

rather, by dwelling in light, love and purity, they must provoke the admiration of their enemies, and advance the victory of the Gospel. It is true that the author also gives advice which would be equally fitting for times of peace,¹ but he lays stress on the fact that through suffering the average level of Christianity must and should be raised.² The true Christian as shown in suffering—that is the theme of the Epistle, and it is in this direction that the picture of Christ is turned as often as it is brought in; the object this so-called Peter had in view was neither one of Church policy nor of polemical dogma—for nowhere is there any mention of heresies—but simply and solely one of practical utility. He refrains entirely from supporting these practical ideas even by a substructure of dogmatic theology, after the manner of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The secret of the attraction that his work retains to the present day is to be found in this uniformity of tone and in the living warmth which pervades it; since it does not profess to offer a profound revelation, no one feels that anything is wanting in it; it stands as a masterpiece of edifying discourse, which errs neither on the side of the pedantic nor of the trivial.

3. We may assert without hesitation that if the first word, Peter, of our Epistle were absent, no one would have imagined that it had been composed by him. Silvanus, who appears to have acted as scribe, we only know elsewhere as the companion of Paul, and Mark, too, is attested by Philemon³ and Colossians⁴ as having been among Paul's companions at least as the latter grew old. And almost everyone understands the words 'She that is in Babylon, elect together with you,'⁵ as applying to the community of Rome, the spiritual Babylon,⁶ where Paul lived for several years after the year 60; and what connecting links could have existed between Peter and the Pauline communities of Asia Minor? How much easier it would be, in the face of all this, to believe in its Pauline authorship! The language is not precisely that of the Epistle to the Corinthians, but still it is a fluent

¹ iii. 3-7, iv. 7-11, v. 1-5.

² Verse 24.

³ v. 13.

⁴ iv. 16 fol.

⁵ iv. 10, and cf. 2. Tim. iv. 11.

⁶ Rev. xiv.-xviii.

Greek—less Hebraistic even than Paul's; are we, then, to attribute this to Peter, who needed an interpreter when he was upon Greek soil, and is it likely that the Palestinian Peter would simply have quoted the Old Testament from the Septuagint, as is here the case, and that his thoughts should have moved in the forms of the Septuagint? For he abounds even in unintentional echoes from it. This fact, apart from other niceties of Greek expression, makes it impossible that Silvanus should have translated an Aramaic Epistle of Peter¹ into Greek. In that case we should have to go a step further, and believe, with Zahn, that Peter had left the composition of the Epistle to Silvanus, because he considered him better qualified for the task than he was himself. But then verses v. 12-14 would still be a postscript written by the Apostle, and the Epistle would remain a partial Pseudepigraph, since in the superscription it definitely professes to be an Epistle of the Apostle Peter.

This hypothesis is scarcely more probable than Von Soden's, particularly as it presumes an extraordinary measure of self-depreciation in Peter. According to Von Soden, Silvanus composed the Epistle in his old age, long after the death of Peter, in accordance with the ideas of the inspired Apostle. But could we credit the author, as we must in this case, with so blatant a piece of self-praise as that contained in v. 12? and is it likely that Silvanus, about the year 80, would not have considered his own authority sufficient to give fatherly counsel to oppressed brethren in the Pauline mission-district? One thing there is in favour of both forms of the Silvanus hypothesis—it explains the remarkably Pauline attitude of the First Epistle of Peter quite satisfactorily. The Epistle does not of course pretend to be the expression of any school of theological opinion, and therefore it takes up neither a positive nor a negative position upon any of the important and radical principles of Paulinism, but it reminds us of the Pauline Gospel much more strongly than do the Epistle to the Hebrews or the Pastoral Epistles; in its conceptions of Christ, of the saving power of his death, of faith and of the new birth, it both breathes the Pauline spirit and makes use of the Pauline

¹ v. 12.

or how we are to imagine that the earliest forms of the Gospels, with all their richness of material, ever arose. Even this Epistle, in short—and of all the Catholic Epistles it might the soonest give us an impression of naïve and primitive Christianity—could only be ascribed to Peter by one who did not recognise in Jesus that mighty personality which, to the end of their lives, dominated all who had once been drawn beneath its sway. If, on the other hand, the Epistle was the work of Peter himself, we must assume that he was lacking in all originality, and simply produced a slavish copy of the Pauline writings; that he had belonged to the Pauline party at Corinth and had not felt himself adapted to be the head of a party of his own; that the Apostle who was pronounced a rock by the judgment of Jesus must henceforth, by the judgment of Zahn, be considered a spirit of small originality, not to be compared with such men as James, Paul and John: a man accessible by nature to outside influences, who did not find it necessary ‘first to fight his battles with a well-stamped character of his own, in order then to work for the good and the wholesome.’ Finally, the opposite theory, the assignment of 1. Peter to a date previous to 1. Thessalonians and Galatians, is not even worthy of serious discussion, since Paul’s originality is beyond all suspicion, and Paul would not have begun his mission-work in Galatia and Asia if flourishing Christian communities had already been founded there under the influence of Peter—as we should be obliged to assume from v. i. fol.

4. But the tradition is untenable for the simple reason that the conditions set forth in the Epistle show a considerably later date than the period between the years 50 and 67. The author’s intimate acquaintance with the Pauline writings (probably including Hebrews), the Gospels and the Acts points towards none too early a date. Seeing that the office of presbyter had already become so profitable that men had to be warned against tending the flock for filthy lucre,¹ and that it was necessary to forbid the elders to oppress the young men, and the young men to be insubordinate to the elders, we are carried on at least as far as the period in which the

¹ v. 2.

strife between old and young in Corinth gave occasion for the composition of the First Epistle of Clement. On the other hand, the Epistle cannot have been written much after 100, because it was known and made use of by Polycarp, Papias and the author of the Epistle of James. With the rough assignment, then, to about 100 A.D., we ought not to be very far wrong. The Christian communities all over the world¹ were exposed to grievous suffering in enduring the fiery trial of their faith²—such bitter hardships that the ‘end of all things’³ must surely be at hand. The Epistle would have adopted a different tone towards isolated instances of abuse and persecution, such as the Christians had had to endure from the very first; it is evident that here the period of systematic persecution, in which there was no escape from suffering, and in which the Christian was persecuted for his Christianity’s sake,⁴ had set in; the Christians had attracted the notice and the jealous hatred of the Gentile world,⁵ and the great stress laid upon their *loyalty* even towards the Imperial officials, in ii. 13–17, makes it seem very probable that the Government shared this jealousy, since iv. 15 evidently points to public prosecutions in which Christians were tried for their lives. From the note struck in iii. 17–iv. 1 as well as in iv. 19 we may conclude that the punishment of death was already decreed against the Christians; in speaking of annoyances, insults and slanders, the solemn words *εἰ θέλοι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, πᾶσχειν*, would be somewhat disproportionate. It is a further proof of the author’s good sense that he does not make more ado about the iniquity of these judicial murders. No intemperate complaint of the open violence offered to Christians as such, would have been appropriate from the mouth of Peter, and, moreover, the author did not wish to fan the flame of anger, but rather to exhort to patience, forbearance, and trust in God.

Nevertheless, the name of Babylon for Rome is remarkable enough. But the period of the real Christian persecution began, at earliest, under the Emperor Domitian,⁶ and from

¹ v. 9.² iv. 12, i. 7.³ iv. 7, 17.⁴ iv. 16, and cf. iv. 14, iii. 15–17.⁵ ii. 12.⁶ 81–96.

v. 9 we may evidently conclude that the writer was not thinking only of the crimes of Nero. The Epistle would seem to refer directly to the enactments of Trajan about the year 111, known to us from the letters of Pliny the Younger, if we take the obscure word ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος¹ to mean the judicial informer, or *delator*. It has, however, another meaning which is at least equally plausible, that of a 'persistent meddler': so that we cannot adopt the Edicts of Trajan as the *terminus a quo*. In these times of distress such a letter of consolation was of course extremely appropriate. From verse v. 13 and the particularly numerous points of resemblance to the Epistle to the Romans we should be inclined to assume that the author was a Roman Christian, writing perhaps just as some disastrous piece of news from Asia Minor about the persecution of the Christians there had reached his ears. But his limitation of the address to the Churches of five provinces of Asia Minor, in spite of the obviously 'Catholic' tone of the Epistle, might also be explained by supposing that he was himself an inhabitant of Asia Minor, more especially interested in the brethren of his own immediate neighbourhood.

5. The question remains, for what reasons this Christian, who has left behind in 1. Peter such a valuable memorial of his 'fulness, simplicity and truth,' assumed the mask of Peter—a man who had died twenty or thirty years before. If Silvanus were the author we could find no answer to this question. Harnack avoids the question by a bold hypothesis: he doubts whether the primitive document was originally a letter at all; he thinks that the writer was some prominent teacher and confessor of about the year 90, at the latest, but that he had no intention of pretending to be Peter; that another man, probably the author of 2. Peter, invented the beginning and end of the Epistle² in order to give the document the stamp of an Apostolic letter. Before the reference in 2. Peter iii. 1, he contends, no one had quoted a word from 1. Peter as Petrine; the address and conclusion, moreover, can easily be detached from the whole, and contain difficulties which can best be explained on the hypothesis that they were added later on. But, in any case, we should not expect to find the author

¹ iv. 15.² i. 1 fol. and v. 12-14.

expressly named in such quotations before the end of the second century; the document, moreover, bears the character of an epistle stamped in every line,¹ and therefore must have possessed an address from the very beginning. There would surely be something almost miraculous, too, in the complete and sudden success of the false address which, according to Harnack, supplanted it after the year 150. Moreover, the beginning and end appear to me to agree just as excellently with the rest of 1. Peter as they differ from the bombastic style of 2. Peter. The man who forged the first and second verses of the first chapter would have united the principal points of the Epistle in short formulæ with a truly masterly hand; for, with the exception of the name, everything which he there presents has its definite parallel in the Epistle: in i. 2, for instance, we find a most skilful grouping, (1) of the foundation of our salvation—predestination by the *Father*; (2) of the means by which it is accomplished—sanctification by the *Holy Ghost*; and (3) of its end and aim—obedience and purification through the blood of *Christ*. Nor will the concluding verses present any difficulties unless we consider that the body of the Epistle indicates a different personality from that of Peter. As a matter of fact, the author there keeps himself almost entirely in the background, but where, as here, he does speak of himself² everything is perfectly applicable to Peter; even if we follow Harnack in thinking that a 'witness of the sufferings of Christ' does not indicate the disciple who followed his master into the palace of the High Priest when all the rest had fled, we must allow that it is the most perfect characterisation of the witness *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, who imitated his master even to his death on the Cross, and that the close of verse v. 1 sounds like a reference to Matt. xix. 28.

If a Roman Christian of about the year 100 wished to issue such a letter of consolation to his fellow-Christians under an Apostolic title, of the two Apostles of Rome Peter's name would have seemed to him the more suitable, precisely because it was he who had suffered the more grievously for his Christianity's sake. The author refrained from writing an Epistle of Paul, fearing to betray too marked a difference from the master.

¹ i. 3 fol. 12, ii. 13, iv. 12, v. 1-5, 9.

² v. 1.

Since Peter was not sufficiently familiar with Greek, he gave him Silvanus as an interpreter,¹ perhaps on the ground of Acts xv. 23; and it was possibly his familiarity with the tradition that the Gospel of Mark was originally founded on statements of Peter, which made him mention Mark as now in his company. Naturally the Apostle whose eyes were fixed on his approaching end could only have sent this letter of encouragement from Babylon-Rome, from betwixt the lion's very jaws. Since the epistolary style of Paul was our author's standard in every respect, he needed a few remarks such as verses v. 12-14 for the end of his letter, and certain very simple considerations sufficed to produce them. The end of 2. Peter, on the other hand, shows that its author had no feeling for such considerations. 1. Peter is one of the most transparent documents in the New Testament, so long as we can divest our minds of modern prejudices in approaching it.

§ 16. *The Epistle of James*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. xv., by W. Beyschlag 1898 (ed. 6); Hand-Commentar iii. 2: Hebrews, 1. and 2. Peter, James and Jude by H. von Soden, 1899 (ed. 5); F. Spitta: 'Der Brief des Jacobus,' in 'Zur Gesch. u. Litt. d. Urchristentums,' ii. 1-239, 1896; Massebieau: 'L'épître de Jacques est-elle l'œuvre d'un Chrétien?' 1896 (35 pp.); Ad. Harnack: 'Die Chronologie d. altchristl. Litt.' i. 485-491 (1897).]

1. There is no definite connection of thought in the Epistle of James: it consists of separate chapters merely strung together, and treating of certain questions of Christian life and feeling. The address is as short as possible, and final greetings, etc. are absent. Vv. i. 2-18 deal with temptations, which are declared to be salutary if they drive the Christian to prayer and strengthen his humility and his trust in God. Here are described the different relations towards temptation of God and of man's sinful lusts—from God we can receive nothing but good. The next passage² warns us to be *doers* of the word of God after hearing it diligently: this chiefly by curbing anger, bridling the tongue and practising

¹ v. 12.

² i. 19-27.

mercy.¹ Next we are told that this mercy, the omission of which was counted a transgression of the Law before God as much as adultery or murder, was denied by the frequent *disregard of the poor* and the servile preference shown to the rich. No one, under any circumstances, was freed from the duty of loving his neighbour as himself. Yes, a man must have works: faith alone was of no use. Faith without works was dead in itself, as the stories of Abraham and Rahab proved.² Vv. iii. 1-12 are an attack upon the sins of the tongue, while the next passage³ rebukes the love of quarrelling, the worldliness and the tendency to fault-finding nourished by the pride of wisdom. In iv. 13-17 we are called upon never to speak of our plans for future events without a pious 'If the Lord will,' and in the next passage⁴ we have a comparison between the rich man going towards a terrible judgment and the poor man encouraged to wait in patience by the consoling thought of the approaching Parusia. Verse v. 12 commands us to refrain from swearing, and the Epistle ends with various directions concerning prayer, the confession of sins and the treatment of the sick and of those who had erred from the truth.

2. In so far as there is any connection to be found between these separate sections, it is furnished by accidental associations of ideas. The mention in i. 18, for instance, of the 'word of truth' forms the connection to vv. 19 and 23, where the hearing and then the performance of this word are insisted on. In like manner the charge to visit 'the fatherless and widows' calls forth the first apostrophe against the rich,⁵ which is continued in a yet sterner tone and after many digressions in v. 1—again by mere accident. And how easily the author allows himself to be led away from his subject by a subordinate idea may be seen even within the sections, e.g. in i. 5-11, where he completely loses sight of the theme of temptation and speaks of lack of wisdom, of the doubt which paralyses the force of prayer, and of the glory of the brother of low degree as opposed to that of the rich man. As in the Old Testament 'Books of Proverbs'

¹ ii. 1-13.² ii. 14-26.³ iii. 13-iv. 12.⁴ v. 1-11.⁵ Chap. ii.

and the Greek gnomic literature, the sentences are strung together like beads; the scarcity of connecting particles in the Epistle¹ is not a sign of awkwardness of style on the part of the author, but is on the contrary quite in keeping with the character of the Epistle. We might point to the 'discourses' of Jesus arranged by Matthew² as a parallel case, for there too we are frequently met by these unexpected transitions of thought, and accordingly there are many who would represent this Epistle as a similar collection of sayings for the most part already in existence. This supposition acquires much weight from such considerations as are suggested, for instance, by vv. i. 2-18, where 'temptation' evidently means something quite different at the beginning of the passage from what it does at the end; for we cannot seriously suppose that what we are told to 'count pure joy' in verse 2³ is the same thing as what in verse 14 is declared to represent the enticement and seduction of our own evil lusts. Sentences like 'Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above,' and many others,⁴ have the ring of well-worn phrases, and the curious 'but' which connects the second part of verse 19⁵ with the first⁶ is best explained by supposing that the former was taken over without reflection from some written source where it had stood in a different context.

But still the Epistle of James is certainly not a mere compilation, in which the author's only task would have been one of selection. Vv. ii. 14-26 were surely not copied from any other source, any more than ii. 1-7 or iv. 13-16. But the rest of the Epistle fits in completely both in tone and phraseology with these passages; the author writes tolerable Greek throughout; he is master of the language, and can form word-plays like *διεκρίθητε . . . κριταί*,⁷ or *φαινομένη . . . ἀφανιζομένη*⁸ (that of iii. 9 is the most skilful, and betrays an acquaintance with Greek literature), while he even ventures on a sort of oxymoron in the sentence 'let the

¹ E.g., i. 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 26, 27, and v. 1-6.

² E.g., Matt. vii.

³ Cf. 12.

⁴ i. 12, 13, 19^b, 20, 27.

⁵ 'But let every man be swift to hear,' etc.

⁶ 'Know ye this, my beloved brethren.'

⁷ ii. 4.

⁸ iv. 14.

rich man *glory* in that he is made low.¹ His fondness for expressing himself in vivid figures,² his employment, for didactic purposes, of similes from nature and from daily life,³ and of historical examples,⁴ all form part of his own individuality. In this so-called Epistle we are shown, not only the stability of an unerring taste in the collection of extraneous material, but the consistency of a literary personality; and the countless reminiscences of other literatures on which we stumble must be explained by the assumption that in its composition the author allowed himself to be greatly influenced by the rich stores of wisdom treasured in his memory: actually, no doubt, he offers old and new together, but the form in which it stands is all his own mental property. In this respect he stands no lower than Paul or the author of Hebrews, but the space which these would give to Old Testament quotations is filled by him with maxims and concise formulations of his own religious and moral experience.

In a composition of this kind there can obviously be no question of a consistent thesis. To impress upon his readers a quantity of sound precepts for a truly Christian life is the object for which the Epistle was written. That the author makes use of 54 imperatives in 108 verses is a sufficient sign of his intention: he delivers a kind of *sermon of repentance*. He does not wish to impart new wisdom, or to refute heretical doctrines, but simply to unmask the secularisation which had already met him in so many different forms, to hold a mirror to his brethren, that they might see their sorry figures and be lastingly ashamed. Even the passage concerning faith and works⁶ is no exception to this rule—much less does it form the kernel of the Epistle—for it is merely intended to stir up those lax and indolent members of the community who glossed over their disinclination to active works of love by pointing to their faultless faith. The writer represents things as he unfortunately saw them everywhere, and measures them against his own ideal of piety witho-

¹ i. 10.² E.g., i. 14 fol. and 25.³ i. 6, 10 fol., 23 fol., iii. 4 fol., 11 fol.⁴ ii. 21, 25, v. 11, 17 fol.⁵ i. 23 fol.⁶ ii. 14-26.

completeness either in blame or exhortation, but still in the hope of being able to rouse men's consciences with regard to some particularly important points, which he believed were somewhat overlooked in the ordinary preaching to the churches.

3. According to the opening verse, James was written for the 'twelve tribes which are of the dispersion,' and the most obvious interpretation of the words would point to the *Jewish Christians* of countries outside Palestine, for the author certainly wrote to fellow-Christians: nothing in the Epistle reads like an appeal of James to unbelieving countrymen to submit to the word of truth. But the readers are thought of as living in organised communities¹; and where and till when did any purely Jewish Christian communities exist in the Dispersion? Not a single word in the Epistle indicates readers of Jewish origin, for it would be preposterous to see in the 'rich' of chaps. ii. and v. a portrait of the fat, usurious, arrogant Jews, while the word 'Synagogue'² as applied to the general assembly of the addressees, does not imply a Jewish origin any more than does the ἐπισυναγωγή of Hebrews x. 25: it was the most appropriate Greek term for describing the religious assemblies even of Gentiles, and of Gentile Christians down to a much later time. Nowhere is any national prejudice alluded to, and thus it seems best to interpret the address in the same way as that of 1. Peter; the twelve tribes are God's people,³ and God's people, ever since the saving work of Christ, consisted of all believers who, though verily 'of the dispersion,' were to be found on earth.

The Epistle, then, fixes its horizon at the farthest possible point: it is an appeal to the whole of Christendom. And indeed we should have taken it for a truly Catholic Epistle even if it had had no address at all. It was given to the world as a literary work, not sent round by messengers to a definite circle of readers. The numerous appeals which it contains to 'brethren,' 'my brethren,' 'my beloved brethren' are just as rhetorical as the words of ii. 20, 'O vain man.' There is never any reference to the special circumstances of an individual

¹ v. 14.

² ii. 2.

³ 1. Peter ii. 10.

community, nor does any personal intercourse take place between writer and readers; of the epistolary form, in fact, only a faint shadow is preserved.

4. According to the superscription, the author is 'James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.'¹ The mere fact that the title of Apostle is wanting forbids us to think of James the son of Zebedee or James the son of Alphæus, but the former was executed at an early date,² and the latter disappears from the scene after the Ascension.³ All the greater however, was the part played in Jerusalem by James the brother of the Lord,⁴ whom Paul mentions in Galatians⁵ as one of the 'pillars,' naming him actually before Cephas and John. Even Josephus took an interest in him, and in about the year 180 Hegesippus⁶ drew up a minute account of his personality. It may safely be assumed that he fell a victim to Jewish hatred before the outbreak of the Jewish war. And it is to him that, as far as they express an opinion on the subject, the Greek Fathers unanimously ascribed our Epistle. His right to address the whole of Christendom could not be disputed: he was the James *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, who did not need to present himself under any title, while the fact that he did not make a special boast of his relationship to Jesus in the opening verse aroused no wonder, but rather passed for tactfulness.

At first sight there seems to be a good deal of evidence in favour of the view that this 'First Bishop of Jerusalem' was really the author of our Epistle. A thoroughly practical, conservative disposition, as we find it displayed in the Epistle, must surely have been his characteristic; he was a foe to many words, and easily inclined to treat poverty as a virtue without more ado. The tone of the Epistle bears a certain resemblance to that of the discourses of Jesus in Matthew, and points of contact with the Gospels are more numerous here than in any other Epistle of the New Testament. We might also attribute the use of the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach and of the Wisdom of Solomon to a Palestinian Christian of that period, if we could believe that those books

¹ Cf. Jude i., Philip. i. 1.

² Acts xii. 2.

³ Acts i. 13.

⁴ Gal. i. 19.

⁵ Gal. ii. 9.

⁶ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* ii. 23.

were still or already in circulation in the Palestinian tongue. Nevertheless, the arguments against authenticity are far too powerful and numerous to leave room for the slightest doubt on the subject. First, how could the son of a Nazarene carpenter have attained such fluency in the Greek tongue as is here displayed¹—a fluency which, as in the case of Hebrews, absolutely excludes the hypothesis that what we possess is a translation from an Aramaic original? The explanation that he did not acquire his fluency in the use of Greek in the school of a rhetorician but in his daily life is more than naïve, in view of the rhetorical character of the Epistle of James; but he who considers it natural that James should have followed the Septuagint when he wrote in Greek, may certainly, if he likes, define his relation to the Greek tongue as ‘not particularly awkward.’ As to his use of the Septuagint, how could one who had grown up to manhood with his Hebrew Bible by any possibility use the former, especially to the extent here noticeable? For readers in a position to judge, the fact is established that Greek was the writer’s native tongue, or one of them at least.

Secondly, how could that strict upholder of the Law, before whom Peter did not dare to defend the practice of sitting down to meat with Gentile Christians,² have composed an epistle in which the necessity of observing the Ceremonial Law no longer comes under discussion, in which religion is said to consist in morality of conduct,³ which speaks with enthusiasm of the ‘perfect law, the law of liberty,’⁴ culminating in the royal command to love one’s neighbour⁵—and the author of which must therefore have regarded the old Law as imperfect and as a law of bondage? Harnack makes the very apposite remark that the acceptance of such a theory would force us to believe that history had repeated itself in the strangest manner, for in this case a ‘Christianity’ such as that of Hermas, Clement and Justin must already have flourished between the years 31 and 50, and Paul’s appearance would then have been a sort of superfluous intervention—only not calculated this time to make sin greater, but to leave the good in a more precarious condition.

¹ See pp. 217 fol.² Gal. ii. 12.³ i. 27.⁴ i. 25, ii. 12.⁵ ii. 8.

And, thirdly, the passage in chap. ii. vv. 14-26, is wholly inconceivable as coming from the mouth of James in the last years of his life. The writer here disputes the doctrine that man can be justified by faith alone without works (note that he says *justified*, not, according to the Gospel, *saved*): such a lifeless faith, he urges, could be of no use, and even devils possessed it. Now, Paul had taught justification by faith alone, and James ii. 24 is simply the contradiction of Paul's words in Romans iii. 28; as James ii. 23 is an attempt to wrest from Paul his chief authority, Gen. xv. 6, as to the faith of Abraham. That the one passage should be independent of the other is out of the question, still more so that James should have opened the dispute and that Paul should only have set up his theses out of opposition to him.¹ No, the Epistle is directed against a *formula* which had long been used to gloss over moral unfruitfulness, and to detach this from its connection with Paul is to represent things as they are not. The hypothesis which seeks to regard James as the oldest New Testament Epistle, dating back from the thirties or forties or the beginning of 51, is almost more grotesque than the assignment of 1. Peter to a date previous to the chief Pauline Epistles, for a declaration concerning faith and works as conditions of salvation could not possibly have been made *before* the historic and far-reaching activity of Paul; and, moreover, this assignment was evidently prompted merely by the wish not to be obliged to admit an antagonism between Paul and James.

Now, it is certainly possible that in the last years of his life James had heard with sorrow of the suspicious teachings of the Apostle of the Gentiles; it is conceivable—although certainly not very likely—that copies of those very Pauline Epistles had reached him from which the formulæ of James ii. 20 etc. are taken; but could he in such a life-and-death struggle have contented himself with a few superficial objections, while he suffered the really important point—that of the observance of the Ceremonial Law—to pass by him in silence? In the Apostolic Age, or at least in Jerusalem among the leading spirits, so foolish a misunderstanding

¹ Cf. James ii. 14, 16, and 18-20.

of the Pauline thesis is inconceivable. For 'faith' in James ii. 14 etc. is a belief in fact, which even the devils could attain to; whereas with Paul it means a grateful submission to the saving will of God, as revealed in the crucified and risen Christ, and an inner union with Christ—a thing which naturally was only accessible to believers. And so, too, the 'works' which Paul rejects are the works of the Law, which Christ had abrogated; those which James demands, on the other hand, are the fruits of faith such as even under Paul's system would not and could not have been omitted—the 'reasonable service,' in fact, of Romans xii. 1. As far as the practical consequences are concerned, the author of James ii. stands on an equal footing with Paul; he will not allow faith to count as a comfortable excuse for moral indifference, but demands some proof of faith. This is precisely the case with Paul, except that he does not recognise as faith what remains without fruit. Now, this misunderstanding of Pauline expressions would be quite intelligible at some later time, when nothing was known of the rule of the Jewish Law, and the 'works of the Law' were looked upon merely as moral actions: a man of such a time might have written James ii. 14-26 not as a disguised attempt to brand Paul as a heretic, but rather as a correct interpretation of his words.¹ In his eyes the Apostle could not have meant to encourage this easy-going younger generation, which imagined itself certain of heaven for its mere orthodoxy, and therefore he seeks to point out, with as close a connection as possible with Paul's words, how both faith and works could best be accorded their due. The 'vain man' whom he indignantly apostrophises in ii. 20 is not Paul, but someone who interprets Paul in this false and dangerous way. If, on the other hand, James the Just had written this passage about the year 60 or 61, the enemy against whom he contended could not have been a misrepresenter of Paul's teaching, but simply Paul himself, and the arguments employed against him, which could not then be palliated on the saving ground of incomplete knowledge, would in their conscious distortion of the case be as contemptible and cowardly as they were futile. Lastly, we may now add

¹ Cf. 2. Peter iii. 16.

to these arguments against the authorship of James positive tokens of a later time.

5. If the Epistle of James had come down to us under its assignment to the second century—say, to the period between 125 and 150—would commend itself on the diverse grounds. It has a considerable literature behind it, not only Old Testament Apocrypha, but Christian writings of Paul, Hebrews, 1. Peter¹ and the Gospels. The points of resemblance, too, between it and the first Epistle of Clement are many and so striking that it is impossible to explain satisfactorily except by supposing our author to have been acquainted with that Epistle. James shares its fundamental ideas with those of the Shepherd of Hermas, and even in expression it often approaches the latter remarkably closely—the language, what is there expressed in broad and commonplace terms here becomes more refined. Unfortunately, however, the arguments are not forthcoming by which to prove the employment of the one by the other, and when we have no actual quotations to deal with, mere arguments about literary obligation are unsupported and futile. The determined opponent turns round: according to Zahn, it was the study of James ii. 1 which moved Paul in the Epistle to the Romans² to make his exposition of the subject, founded on Genesis xv. 6, incomparably more thoroughgoing than his former utterance in Galatians³; and in writing the Epistle Paul did well, he says, to take James's methods of instruction into consideration, the Christians of Rome were already accustomed to them. Still less telling is the reference to the much-oppressed condition of the Christians, as described in chaps. i. and ii. surely verse ii. 7 ('Do not they blaspheme the honour of the name by the which ye are called?'), coming after verse ii. 1, points to a time in which the Christians were persecuted for their Christianity's sake⁴; when even fellow-believers are not seldom to have denounced one another.

Further, the state of the communities both as to morality and religion seems to have degenerated more consider-

¹ Cp. James iv. 6 fol. with 1. Peter v. 5 fol., and James i. 18, 21. 1. Peter i. 23-ii. 2.

² iv. 3-24.

³ iii. 5-7.

⁴ Cf. 1. Peter iv. 16

than we should have thought it possible before the time of *Hermas*. Universal indifference had established itself in the Church, and men sought shamelessly to excuse their vices and their laxity on the pretext that the temptations to which they were subjected came from God,¹ or that since they possessed faith, that was enough for salvation.² A long time must have passed before Paul's doctrine of 'faith alone' could have been so boldly misapplied, and in a Church the majority of whose members set themselves so low a standard a reaction like that of Montanism (which began about 155 A.D.) could not have been far off. But the main point is that the writer's whole attitude, his theological position, take us, when compared with the interests and ideas of the Apostolic age, into a totally different world. Christ is scarcely mentioned at all, and when he is, it is only as the longed-for Judge; the Messianic idea has entirely disappeared, and faith now consists half in knowing,³ and half in remaining steadfast.⁴ The Epistle speaks of the Law entirely in the manner of the second century, with its enthusiasm for the 'nova lex.' Religion has lost the sharp, decisive features of the early times; practically nothing is left of it now but generalities—on the one hand a firm trust in God's goodness, expressed in prayer and never losing hope, and on the other a zealous fulfilment of God's commands, an exercise of pure piety as defined in verse i. 27. The author does not fight for Christ, for faith, for hope, but for conduct, for uprightness, for self-discipline; it is not his part to found and increase a Church in defiance of the world, but to drive the world out of the Church. On the face of it the Epistle of James declares itself, in spite of its earnestly religious character, to be perhaps the least Christian book of the New Testament—hence its want of attraction for Luther—and can it be that such a document belongs to the earliest Christian times?

With this assignment of the Epistle to so late a date, we may perhaps feel the absence of some reference to heretical troubles. Verse i. 17 can scarcely have been spoken with an anti-Gnostic purpose, but vv. iii. 1 fol. 'be not many teachers' (the very opposite of Hebrews v. 12) and iii. 13 fol. show that there

¹ i. 13.² ii. 14.³ ii. 14 fol.⁴ i. 6.

was no lack of vexatious tendencies of the kind at the time of our Epistle. Its author, however, did not look upon such wranglings as the main evil, or rather he did not expect much success from controversy with these fluent disputants. To conclude from his silence as to Gnostic seducers that he knew of none, would be just as wise as to conclude that because he gives no warning against sins of impurity there were no harlots and adulterers among his readers, and therefore that he could not be addressing Gentile Christian communities! He wished neither to draw up a complete list of requirements, nor a manual for inexperienced 'teachers,' but to offer 'some spiritual gift' for the edification of the Church; but all his observations led him to the conclusion that the Church of that time was lacking in moral energy, and he thought that if this lack were supplied the other evils would vanish of themselves. A blameless life he regarded as the test of the possession of truth and purity of faith. Perhaps, too, the split between the Church and the heretics had become wider by his time, so that as he had nothing to do with those outside, he was obliged to content himself with holding up a mirror to his own party, with its conceited orthodoxy, in order to draw its attention to the many blots with which it was still disfigured. Nor had Gnosticism appeared everywhere in equal strength, and where our Epistle was written we do not know. Many opinions favour Rome, but connections with Rome can be discovered in every document of uncertain origin of about this date, and Rome was certainly not the sole producer—scarcely even the most distinguished—of this form of literature.

But we have no grounds at all for fixing upon Palestinian soil and Jewish-Christian surroundings as the source of the Epistle of James. There is even less of distinctively Jewish character to be observed about the author than of distinctively Christian; his morality is rather Hellenistic than Palestinian, and the resemblances to Old Testament phraseology and thought in his Epistle are the fruit of many years' study of Church literature, in which, of course, the Old Testament ranked very high. His practical wisdom is of mixed Jewish, Christian and Pagan origin; he was probably a man of

education, but sprung from a family that had long been Christian, and he wrote under the name of James, not because he wished to mark the antagonism between Paul and the Jewish Christians, but probably because he honoured in the person of James the first representative of the Lord upon earth, and did not venture to imitate Peter or Paul, whose Epistles were already in circulation. The exceedingly late appearance of James in the literature of the Church¹ is also a strong support to this view.

6. Some have recently attempted to throw a fresh light on the origin of James by assuming the existence of interpolations. In an investigation useful in many ways for the special exegesis of this Epistle, Spitta puts forward the ingenious hypothesis that James is a Jewish—possibly pre-Christian—document, for which a Christian admirer wished to find a place in the New Testament, and therefore inserted the name of Christ in the address and in verse ii. 1. And independently of Spitta, Massebieau has arrived at a similar result. There is much in ii. 1 to make that view attractive; the rest of the address in i. 1, however, would sound exceedingly strange as a superscription to an epistle of a Jew to his fellow-believers. But what is urged against the pre-Pauline origin of vv. ii. 14–26 has just as much weight when directed against the supposition that the author was a Jew; I cannot believe that a Jew would write such sentences as i. 18, ii. 5, 7 and iv. 4, any more than that he would take pride in the ‘law of freedom,’ as in vv. i. 25 and ii. 12,² or that he would be yearning for the Parusia of the Lord.³

There is nothing in the Epistle which could *only* have been said by a Jew, and even such thoroughly Christian writings as 1. Peter contain large sections which might as well have been written by a Jew as by anyone else.⁴ If we can believe that the Epistle of James, although of Jewish origin, gave such extraordinary pleasure to a Christian of about the year 150 that he could not help changing it into a New Testament Scripture

¹ In any case not till after the year 200.

² Cf. ii. 8.

³ v. 7 fol.

⁴ E.g., ii. 1 fol. 11–20, iii. 1–14.

by the addition of a dozen words, we could as easily believe that a Christian of that time might have produced the whole document himself, seeing that no previous mention of it exists. The one theory is not in the least more difficult to accept than the other.

Harnack sets the Christian editor another task. He suggests that a collection of maxims and fragments of discourse which had been in circulation, say, since 180, and had originated with a post-Apostolic Teacher, was, about the year 200, remodelled by an unknown hand into a letter, for which it had never been intended, by the prefixing of verse i. 1, while at the same time it was provided with a great name, which soon won it the respect due to a Canonical work. But Harnack's reasons are not convincing. To say that no one would write a letter like this document is an exaggeration, where it is a case as here, of a more or less skilful adaptation of a literary form unsuited to the object which the author had in view; I could rather believe that the Epistle was an excerpt from an original much longer letter than a compilation from the discourses of the aforesaid Teacher. That the address appeals, in a somewhat artificial manner, to the whole of Christendom, while parts at least of the document are directed to a perfectly definite and limited circle, is a reproach which would apply to every Catholic Epistle, apart from any 'artificiality.' Finally, he contends that the forger nowhere indicates that he wishes to be considered as James, and, therefore that the so-called Epistle cannot originally have been a forgery. Now, I should have thought that the author made a claim throughout on the obedience of his readers, and wrote with the conviction that he had the right of administering sharp reproof to them¹; but if we go in search of indications that he is posing as James we mistake his object entirely. Clearly the forger neither prefixed the name of James to his Epistle nor wrote the Epistle itself, merely because he was determined to play the part of James, but because he wished to secure a universal hearing for his words. This he secured by the superscription; further efforts to appear as James would imply a consciousness of the danger and untruthfulness of such literary fictions, and a fear

¹ We need only note verses v. 12-14 fol.

of the critical mistrust of his readers, both of them feelings as foreign to the writers of that day as they would be unavoidable to those of ours.

§ 17. *The Epistle of Jude*

[Cf. the works mentioned in § 18.]

This Epistle contains but a single section, besides its address and greeting and its doxological ending. The author begs his readers bravely to shield the faith delivered to them, against those who had the appearance of Christians but who nevertheless shamelessly denied the Lord.¹ He then reminds them briefly² of the punishments which had lighted upon similar offenders in the past, and this leads up to a description of the audacious dreamers of to-day, who went astray from the truth and destroyed the foundations of faith,³ and to an exhortation to keep the right course in the face of these dangers.⁴

The Epistle purports to be written by one Judas, brother of James. Now, this cannot be the Apostle 'Judas the son of James,' of whom we hear in Luke and the Acts,⁵ because, although the name of his father is mentioned, nothing is said of any brother; but since the addition evidently presupposes that this brother James was a distinguished personage, we are obliged to turn to that James who was the brother of Jesus and the pretended author of the Epistle of James. But then Judas must also have been a brother of Jesus—a point upon which he might have kept silence out of respect⁶—and according to Matt. xiii. 55 and Mark vi. 3 there actually was such a person. The addressees are all those 'that are called and kept for Jesus Christ,' and therefore the circle for which it is intended appears to have been just as 'catholic' as that of the Epistle of James; moreover, the epistolary form is here purely artificial, as is proved by the end. Yet in itself there is nothing impossible in the theory that it was addressed to a single church or group of churches, which, on receiving the document,

¹ Vv. 3 fol.

² Vv. 5-7.

³ Vv. 8-16.

⁴ Vv. 17-23.

⁵ Luke vi. 16; Acts i. 13.

⁶ See p. 220.

found themselves fully enough described in verse 1. Verse 3 appears at first sight to suggest that the author was in constant correspondence with those to whom he wrote. But all individual traits are wanting; the word 'beloved' in vv. 3, 17 and 20 is no argument to the contrary.

The sole object of the Epistle is to warn Christendom against a band of pseudo-Christians whose doctrines were no less abominable and anti-Christian than was their moral conduct. It is written in deep sorrow at the spread of such tendencies in the Church, but it shows more zeal than ability in attacking them; the writer allows a larger space to his wrath against these wretches and to a description of the judgment awaiting them than to a *demonstration* of the meanness of their principles and practice. Only in a few places¹ does he give any positive information concerning them—and even that is often no more than indicated—and the real refutation consists entirely in the assertion² that through the oracles of Prophets and Apostles men had long been prepared for such phenomena. The style does not show any very striking facility,³ but it is not without a certain pithy vigour.

2. The enemies contended against in Jude are not merely vicious and weak-kneed Christians—perhaps such as had fallen away through persecution—still less Jewish revolutionaries, but rather *Antinomian Gnostics*. They have not yet left the Church,⁴ but on the contrary practise their deceit within it, and take advantage of the credulity of the others to trade upon their visions⁵ and their superior wisdom.⁶ This was precisely why they were so dangerous. That they were Gnostics is, however, proved by verse 19, for the separation of mankind into different classes, and the haughty contempt here mentioned in which the 'spiritual' party held the 'psychical,' were distinct characteristics of Gnosticism. Verses 8^b and 10^b can only mean that they rejected the Old Testament revelation and regarded the God of the Old Testament and his angels either as powers of evil, hostile to the true God, or at least as imperfect and as standing far below the true God—

¹ Vv. 4, 8, 10 (12 and 16), 19, 23.

² Vv. 4, 14 fol. and 17 fol.

⁴ Verse 12.

⁵ Verse 8.

³ E.g., verse 16.

⁶ Verse 16.

which again was characteristic of Gnosticism. Connected with this, too, is the fact that they enjoined the transgression of the Old Testament commandments without distinction as a duty, and even—most appalling of all in the author's eyes—practised the 'defilement of the flesh' and indulged their unnatural lusts.¹ How far the writer gives a correct version of their doctrines in this last respect, or whether he was not repeating mere malignant rumours, we need not decide; the fact of their hyper-Pauline Antinomianism and of the distinctively Gnostic type of their 'defilements' remains unshaken. But whether we see in them Carpocratists or Archontics, or members of some school that afterwards disappeared, we cannot date either them or the Epistle before the time of the Pastoral Epistles.²

The writer also shows by his conception of faith that he is a man of a later time; our 'most holy faith' is a thing which can be delivered once and for all,³ and is therefore objectively the orthodox creed. The time of Christ's Apostles is past, according to verse 17, and in verse 4 a saying of Christ's is introduced as having been set forth from *of old*. The fact that he does quote sentences of Christian origin—even though we may continually dispute his acquaintance with Paul and more particularly with the Pastoral Epistles—proves that he did not belong to the first two Christian generations. Nor would his active use of Apocryphal writings—such as of the Assumption of Moses⁴ and of the Book of Enoch⁵—seem to betray the taste of a Primitive Apostle either, and the occurrence of two or three such quotations in this short Epistle is surely a fact of some importance. From our knowledge of the history of these Apocrypha, as well as of Gnosticism and of the Epistle itself, it seems most natural to assume that the author was an *Egyptian* Christian. From external evidence alone we know that Jude must have been written before 180, but we should not venture to decide on any positive decade between that year and 100. It would be advisable, however, not to place it too late, as the author's mood seems to be one of astonishment and indignation at this *new* ungodliness.

¹ Vv. 8 and 23.

² See pp. 195 fol.

³ Vv. 3, 20.

⁴ Verse 9.

⁵ Verse 14 (and 6?).

unlikely as that the objects of 1. Peter or Hebrews should only have been made manifest in vv. v. 12 and xiii. 9-16 respectively. On the contrary, the kernel of the Epistle (that is, the key to its comprehension) lies in chap. iii., as we might already suppose from verse iii. 1, with its reference to i. 13 ('to stir you up by putting you in remembrance'). To revive and establish for all time the firm trust in the Parusia of Christ, both in the face of insolent criticism and of peevish murmurs that it had already been awaited too long in vain, is the sole object of the Epistle; for the author attributes all the retrogression in moral conduct in the Church to the weakening of hope in the approach of a heavenly kingdom, and of fear of the Last Judgment. In order to further the work of degeneration, these abominable heretics had, with cunning strategy, made the belief in the Parusia their chief point of attack; he who sought to save this belief must begin by refuting the heretics and exposing them in all their worthlessness beneath the full glare of the Divine judgments and sentences, as made known in the Bible. Their opinion must be divested in advance of all authority in the discussions about the Parusia. The connection between chap. i. and vv. iii. 1-13 is still more distinct; as early as i. 3-11 our gaze is directed towards the great and precious promises, towards the eternal kingdom of Christ, which men might deserve by a firm faith and the diligent practice of virtue; while vv. i. 12-21 point to the guarantees for the Christian's belief in the Parusia—the inspired Prophets and Apostles who were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the glory of Jesus. For what was the Transfiguration on the Holy Mount but a foretaste of the Parusia? The 'knowledge' on which the writer lays such stress¹ refers to the motives of God in delaying—apparently—the fulfilment of his promises concerning the Second Coming, and in iii. 14-18 he returns in reality to the subject of the opening exhortations, the meaning of which is here for the first time made fully clear. In verse 15 he emphasises the fact once more that the teaching of *all* the Apostles—not excepting Paul, out of whose Epistles the enemy sought to make capital—was absolutely identical on this point.

¹ i. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, ii. 20 and iii. 18.

We must confess that the author has put his case not unskilfully, except for the somewhat extravagant polemical part in chap. ii.; he shows what powerful authority the expectation of the Parusia had on its side, how base and vulgar were its opponents, and this prepares the reader's mind for the explanation why there was and could be no question of a disappointment of hopes already excited, in spite of the delay in their fulfilment. The intellectual demands of his readers would certainly have been completely satisfied by such a treatment of the subject. It is more doubtful whether the Epistle immediately produced that moral and religious growth which, in the writer's eyes, was the necessary consequence of this strengthening of Christian knowledge; too little is left in 2. Peter of the infectious enthusiasm kindled by the love of Christ which glows throughout the First Epistle.

3. The Epistle purports to be written by 'Symeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ' (the combination is similar to that in Romans i. 1-4) and is addressed to all believers. We cannot for a moment entertain the idea of rejecting the superscription, since both in vv. i. 18 and iii. 15 the writer appears again as an Apostle, in the former as one of the disciples who witnessed the scene of the Transfiguration¹—i.e. either as Peter or as one of the sons of Zebedee—while in iii. 1 he represents himself as one who had already written an Epistle to the same addressees, and in i. 13 as one who in the face of approaching death wished to draw up his testament for the Christian world. Nor is he anywhere untrue to the part, either as regards himself or his readers; in i. 16, it is true, the readers appear to owe their Christianity, not to himself, but to all the Apostles, but that might be said of all Christians; and the words of iii. 2, 'the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your Apostles,' is only intended, like the passage about Paul, to emphasise the uniformity of all Apostolic declarations. The words of an Apostle were, according to the writer's conception of him, intended for every believer, and therefore he did not recognise any difference² between his own or 1. Peter's circle of readers, and that of a Pauline

¹ Matt. xvii. 1 fol.

² iii. 1.

Epistle.¹ Whether the writer had any particular passage of the Pauline literature in his mind when he wrote verse iii. 15 is uncertain,² but to doubt the identity of the earlier letter mentioned in iii. 1 with 1. Peter, and to invent a lost Epistle of Peter in its stead, is a piece of hypercriticism on the part of the partisans of tradition all the more superfluous as the reference here to 1. Peter is not in the least unnatural. The longing for the Parusia dominates 1. Peter too, and it is precisely the thesis of the First Epistle that 'the end of all things is at hand'³ that 2. Peter is intended to defend, although certainly with some explanatory reservations against those who denied the doctrine of the Second Coming. 2. Peter, in short, appears to stand in the same relationship to 1. Peter as 2. Thessalonians to 1. Thessalonians.

4. This apparently obvious situation, however, out of which 2. Peter seems to have arisen, is untenable when subjected to criticism. *2. Peter was not written by the author of the First Epistle*, so that if the latter, which is cited by our Epistle as Petrine, is not from the hand of Peter, how much less can the Second Epistle claim to be of Apostolic origin! In no New Testament writing can pseudonymity be so abundantly proved as in 2. Peter, and in none has it been recognised by so many scholars who in other matters hold the most conservative views. It is precisely in order to save the First Epistle that these latter have given up the Second. That the two Epistles have some points in common goes without saying, when we consider the acquaintance of the one with the other, but nevertheless they are as far removed from one another both in form and substance as, say, Hebrews from Galatians. And since, if we accepted their authenticity, they must necessarily approach each other very nearly, this difficulty is insurmountable; it increases still more, however, when Zahn places the Second Epistle a few years earlier than the First, the only result of which is to show, to our considerable surprise, how far greater was the presumptive writer of 1. Peter, Silvanus, than the 'pillar-apostle'

¹ iii. 15.

² It might suggest Rom. ii. 4, but also 2. Thess. ii. 13 fol. and 1. Thess. v. 1 fol.

³ 1. Peter, iv. 7.

trained in the school of Jesus. The style of 2. Peter, which is quite different in vocabulary from the First Epistle, is marked by a certain turgidity which offers the strongest contrast to the fluency of 1. Peter; the writer tries to write elegantly,¹ but is in reality very far from faultless in the construction of his sentences.² We are also struck by the scantiness of his modes of expression, which obliges him to make frequent repetitions of the same phrases. The part which in 1. Peter is played by hope, is here taken by knowledge; the sufferings and persecutions around which everything turns in 1. Peter are here not even mentioned; what 1. Peter reveres most highly in Christ is his blessed suffering; here it is his majesty and power.

But 2. Peter is very largely dependent upon Jude, and the very fact that by far the greater part of the latter Epistle (late as it is) is taken up and repeated in 2. Peter, destroys the assumption of the latter's authenticity even if it were possible to credit Peter with so gross a piece of plagiarism. Chap. ii. is a complete reproduction of Jude 3-18. The fact that Jude in verse 18 mentions as an Apostolic prophecy words which might be identified with 2. Peter iii. 3, might seem to favour the priority of the latter; but in reality this is only brought forward in Jude as a prophecy universally known. In all the rest of the passage we should be more likely, in comparing, so far as is possible, the parallels between Jude and 2. Peter, to recognise a motive for the latter to alter, amplify, smooth down and give a rhetorical polish to the material he had before him in Jude, than *vice versa*. Again, the fact seems to me to weigh heavily against the priority of 2. Peter, that while Jude openly speaks of the heretics as of an *existing* danger, the author of 2. Peter tries to maintain the fiction that he is merely prophesying future events, but betrays the unreality of his attitude by constantly slipping back from the future of vv. ii. 1 fol. into the present³ and even into the past⁴ tenses. Could Jude, in

¹ Cf. expressions like *λήθη*, i. 9; *ταρταρώ*, ii. 4; *βλέμμα*, ii. 8, and *ἄθεσμοι*, ii. 7 and iii. 17.

² i. 3 fol. and ii. 15 fol.

³ Vv. ii. 10, 12 fol., 18, and so on.

⁴ ii. 15, 22.

the position of imitator, have transformed this impression of artificiality into one of naturalness by an equally artificial alteration of certain passages? And what object could there have been in constructing the Epistle of Jude out of 2. Peter?

On the other hand, it is quite conceivable that the author of 2. Peter might have woven into his own Epistle, *though with the omission of the quotations from Apocryphal writings to which exception might be taken*,¹ the smaller and, as he thought, already half-forgotten Epistle of Jude, whose vigorous invectives seemed to him quite worth using. Jude is intelligible from beginning to end without the supposition that it drew from a previous work, and so is 2. Peter, for indeed it must honestly be confessed that if we had had no knowledge of Jude, we should never have suspected that an older document had here been copied down with a mixture of freedom and servility most instructive to the student of literary obligations; still, since we *must* choose, everything seems to speak for the priority of Jude (as above for that of 1. Peter). The parallels to Jude are to be met with throughout the whole Epistle,² so that by such hypotheses as that a later writer had interpolated the whole central portion,³ a recast of the Epistle of Jude, into a genuine Epistle of Peter, we only create difficulties where all might be clear. As is shown in vv. 20-23, Jude combats heresy as such; hence he concludes with counsels as to how his readers were to defend themselves against their seducers, and help back the seduced into the right path. In tone and expression these counsels suit the preceding arguments excellently; 2. Peter, on the other hand, employs the diatribe against heretics as the means to another end, and can therefore do nothing with Jude 20-23. Does this not destroy the assumption that Jude is an excerpt from 2. Peter?

Moreover, the author of 2. Peter made free use of other writings also: of the Pauline Epistles,⁴ including the

¹ Vv. 9 and 14 fol.

² i. 5 (σπουδην πάντας = Jude 3), 12 (ἐπομιμνήσκειν . . . εἰδότες = Jude 5), and again in iii. 3, 7, 17 and 18.

³ i. 20-iii. 3.

⁴ E.g., 1. Thess. v. 2 in iii. 10.

Pastorals,¹ of the Gospels, probably of the First Epistle of Clement, and of the Apocalypse of Peter, recently discovered in an Egyptian tomb.² The points of contact between these two pseudonymous Petrine writings are certainly not accidental; they might possibly be explained on the supposition that both had made use of a third document, but more easily by the contrary assumption that the author of the Apocalypse was acquainted with 2. Peter. But so long as the date of this Apocalypse remains undetermined, the solution of the question is for the present of little use to us.

5. One thing gains a certain amount of probability from the above-mentioned resemblance, as well as from the incorporation of Jude, and that is that 2. Peter, like the two writings in question, was of Palestinian or Egyptian origin. With regard to its date, the external evidence supplies a *terminus ad quem* at the end of the second century at latest, and we shall not challenge the assignment to the period between 125 and 175. We do not wish to lay too much stress on the doubts³ raised by the non-appearance of the Parusia, since these might easily have arisen earlier, but there is no lack of other evidence, even apart from the literary dependence of the Epistle. The primitive Catholic Church with its three authorities, the Prophets, the Lord, and the Apostles, is complete⁴; the Epistles of 'our brother Paul' had not only been completely collected, but could be placed on a level with 'the other scriptures,'⁵ and therefore enjoyed Canonical acceptance, while both Gnostics and orthodox Christians appealed to them as authorities in their disputes. In spite of the hatred against Gnosticism, the Church had adopted the Gnostic's worst fault, his exaggerated reverence for knowledge. However plainly the Epistle may assume the part of a precautionary exhortation designed for the needs of later times,⁶ it is nevertheless clear that it was written in the very midst of the struggle against heresy, against subjectivism (see i. 20: *ιδίας επιλύσεως*); and that it only recognised as true what

¹ Eg., i. 16, *σεσοφισμένοι μῦθοι*.

² Cf. A. Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen*, ix. 2, pp. 90 fol. (1893), 2nd ed. pp. 87 fol.

³ iii. 4.

⁴ i. 19-21, iii. 2.

⁵ iii. 16.

⁶ Most markedly in iii. 17.

as well as the unexpected returns to themes already fully discussed, only arise from the varying moods of the writer, and this partly explains the fact that at many points it is impossible to make out where the boundary between two reflections lies. And just as large sections of the Epistle might be taken away without leaving any visible gap, so before the end the writer might have continued the old threads for some time longer without altering the character of the Epistle, or in any way diminishing or increasing the impression created by the whole.

Verses i. 1-4 form the introduction, in which the writer asserts his fitness for the task before him. Next ¹ he makes it clear that fellowship with God, who is synonymous with light, was out of the question in the case of certain men—those who walked in darkness, who thought themselves, forsooth, free from sin, and yet did not fulfil the commandments of Christ—who, above all, blindly and shamefully neglected his principal commandment, that of brotherly love. His readers, on the other hand, to whom he first offers the highest testimony,² were not to allow themselves to be led away by any temptation from the love of the Father to the love of the world.³ The danger was not small, for the fore-runners of the approaching End had now arisen in great numbers: the Antichrists who owned not Jesus as the Christ, and therefore denied both Father and Son.⁴ The faithful should attack such seducers with the strong self-confidence of those who had long possessed the unction of the Spirit,⁵ who were already children of God, and were only bound to prove it by doing justly and practising a brotherly love that rejoiced in all self-sacrifice. Nought but this distinguished the children of God from the Cainites, the children of the Devil.⁶ In iii. 2, 3 the writer sums up and defines the commandment of God, 'that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another,' and appears to be hastening to a close⁷; but in iii. 24 he introduces, with the remark 'thereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us,' a keen argument⁸ against the false spirits

¹ i. 5-ii. 11.² ii. 12-14.³ ii. 15-17.⁴ ii. 18-26.⁵ ii. 26 fol.⁶ ii. 28-iii. 18.⁷ iii. 19 fol.⁸ iv. 1-6.

who denied that Jesus Christ was 'come in the flesh,' and points out the connection between the commandment to love our brother and the belief in Jesus, the Son of God.¹ This faith was our acknowledgment of the boundless love of God for us; it lifted us into the sphere of God (that is, of Love), and our continuance therein was impossible unless we became one with it and practised Love. The last verses² give a final exhortation to joy in prayer, to a common battle against sin, and against the world which 'lieth in the evil one.' We possess the true God and eternal life in Jesus Christ; far be it, then, from us to worship idols!

2. It is evident that our Epistle, which, in spite of the words 'I write unto you,' 'I have written unto you,' and, as early as i. 4, 'these things we write,' hardly bears the appearance of a letter, is a manifesto addressed to the whole of Christendom. The words 'you also,' 'ye also,' of i. 3, are not intended to distinguish certain definite readers from the great mass of believers, but rather to differentiate the Church founded by the Apostles from its founders, the eye-witnesses of revelation. The words in which the readers are addressed, 'little children,' 'my little children,' 'brethren,' 'beloved' (and at one point³ the 'little children' are divided into 'fathers' and 'young men'), are as indefinite as possible in tone: no trace is to be found of a narrower circle of readers, and in v. 11-13 'you' is exchanged for 'we.' Zahn's penetration discovers in this Epistle, free as it is from all personal references, that the addressees⁴ represent only a part of Christendom, the Asiatic churches, which, according to v. 21, had grown up on heathen soil: thus, he interprets the words 'ye have overcome them' of iv. 4 in the sense of 'the Asiatic churches have overcome them.' Unfortunately, however, it is not so easy to construe verse iv. 4⁵ as 'the God that is in the Asiatic churches is greater than he that is in the world.' It seems most natural to look for the object of this encyclical in the *preservation of Christianity* (to which of course the false spirits and the Antichrists no longer belonged⁶) in the *true faith of Christ and the true brotherly love*, without which *there* could be no union with God. But the author was

¹ i. v. 7-v. 13.² i. 21.³ ii. 12-14.⁴ ii. 19.⁵ ii. 19.

practical trait of insistence upon righteousness, upon the fulfilment of the commandments and upon the practice of love, and both these characteristics together are the mark of Old-Catholicism. His idea of Christ is not exactly that of oneness with the Father, for the passages which sound very much like an obliteration of the line of distinction between Father and Son—and sometimes it is impossible to tell which of the two the writer means—are to be explained by his desire to brand the denial of the Son¹ as a denial of the Father, and so to fix upon the Antichrists the further sin of hostility to God, to mark them out as worshippers of idols. But the writer proves himself a member of the Catholic Church by the stress he lays upon holding fast to the ancient doctrine, the doctrine accessible to *all*²; the commandment heard ‘from the beginning’ (*ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς*)³ represents the same idea to him, and with the same force, as does that of the tradition delivered ‘once for all’ (*ἅπασι*), to Jude.⁴

The external evidence in support of this Epistle is relatively good, but nothing hinders us from assigning it to the period between 100 and 125; 1. Peter certainly gives us an impression of greater primitiveness.

4. The question of authorship is here inseparable from that of the relation of the Epistle to the Fourth Gospel, and from that of its authenticity: that is to say, of the credibility of that very ancient Church tradition according to which the Apostle John composed both the Gospel and the Epistle. The main question can only be decided, if at all, in dealing with the Gospel; as regards the Epistle, we must first observe that the author does not name himself, so that there can be no question of pseudonymity, and yet that he assumes Apostolic authority,⁵ although avoiding the Apostolic title. He does not impart a single saying from the Saviour’s lips, however, or a single definite incident of his history—only abstract theories and speculations which are, to say the least of it, surprising as coming from an Apostle. His ignoring of the Old Testament is also remarkable, and in fact nothing but the evidence of the author himself would lead us to

¹ ii. 22 fol.² ii. 20, 27.³ ii. 7, 24, iii. 11.⁴ Jude 3 and 5.⁵ i. 1-3, 5.

suppose that this document was the work of an Apostle. And since this evidence is limited to the introductory verses, we can only maintain that what he wished was to give his production the authority of eye- and ear-witnesses, rather than to take the name of one particular Apostle; especially when we consider the many plurals in i. 1-5. (Later on the writer speaks of himself in the singular, and uses the plural, with or without *ἡμεῖς*, only when speaking in the name of believers collectively, or in the sense of 'one.') But how indeed could he refute the pseudo-prophets except with the highest of all earthly authority, that of the collective witness of the disciples of Jesus, ever renewed through brotherly love and destined to endure until the return of Christ? If the writer himself were an Apostle of overwhelming authority, he acted with very little wisdom in concealing his name; it would certainly not have endangered the idea of the uniformity of all Apostolic preaching to have stated clearly to his readers,—the like-minded, the hostile, and above all the undecided—whose authority it was that was here fighting for the truth.

But for us the fact is all the more certain that the writer of the First Epistle of John is identical with the writer of the Fourth Gospel. The relationship between the two documents, with all their outward difference of form, is most striking.

In the Gospel, too, the writer conceals his name, but describes himself as an eye-witness in words which must remind us of the corresponding phrases in the Epistle.¹ Innumerable parallels between the two documents have long since been observed, beginning with the opening sentence in each.² Elsewhere we may compare, for instance, vv. iv. 12, 20 of the Epistle with verse i. 18 of the Gospel—'no man hath seen God at any time'—or 1. John v. 12, 'He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life,' with iii. 36 of the Gospel, and 1. John i. 4, 'that our joy may be fulfilled,' with John xv. 11, xvi. 24, xvii. 13. There is never any question of mere copying in these cases, still less does one document expressly quote the other; but just as repetitions are extremely common both within the

¹ Gosp. i. 14, xix. 35,

² Gosp. *ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν*; Epist. *ὃ ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*.

of Christianity were now being seriously threatened by the Gnostics, who actually employed some of his formulæ in order to recommend themselves to the ignorant, and who in effect found many points of agreement between their views and his. For his 'apology' he chose the epistolary form which Paul had raised to honour, although without making any material changes in his style to suit it.

§ 20. *The Shorter Epistles of John*

[Cf. works mentioned in § 19; also A. Harnack, 'Über den 3^{ten} Johannesbrief,' in the 'Texte und Unters. zur altchr. Lit.' xv. 3, 1897.]

1. These two Epistles, which resemble one another very closely in outward form, return to a more distinct epistolary style; they possess both address and final greeting, and in both the writer calls himself the 'Presbyter,' although in 2. the addressee is 'the elect *Kyria* and her children,' and in 3. 'Gaius the beloved.' This parallel in 3. 1 might at first sight lead us to suppose that the addressee of 2. was also an individual Christian, who was perhaps named *Kyria*, or else whose name was left unmentioned, in which case the word must be translated 'lady.' But nowadays it is almost universal to take the word 'lady' as referring figuratively to a community of the Lord (a single Christian community according to verse 13), in which again the whole of Christendom might be symbolised. For the writer could scarcely have called a Christian lady of his time 'beloved by all them that know the truth,' even allowing for the greatest extravagance of style. According to verse 4, her children must have been unusually numerous, and this verse can only be made to agree with verse 1, by assuming that there the word 'children' is used in a narrower sense than here. The use of both singular and plural in addressing this 'lady'¹ also favours such an interpretation, and moreover the chief contents of the Epistle are by no means private in character. But precisely because the matter of the Epistle is suited to the whole Church, and not merely to a single community, and since the

¹ Singular in vv. 4, 5 and 13; plural in vv. 6, 8, 10 and 12.

author would scarcely have wished it seriously to be restricted to a single community, he might just as well have intended to address an individual Christian matron under the name of Kyria as an individual Christian brother under that of Gaius, and the difficulties might be explained by supposing that the addresses are fictitious. The epistolary form led him to write to individuals, but he intended that these writings should have a 'catholic' circulation.

Besides the address and ending, 2. John consists only of a plea to its recipients to walk according to the commandments of God, especially in the matter of mutual love, and, in defiance of all Antichrists who denied the incarnate Christ, to stand fast in the teaching of Christ.¹ The false teacher was not to be received into their houses, nor even to be given a greeting.² This last piece of advice is the only part peculiar to the Epistle, and we may conclude that the writer's object was to establish it as a principle with regard to the treatment of heretics.

The Third Epistle has, after its address, an introduction³ which reminds us of the Pauline prefaces—an expression of the writer's joy, that, as others had borne witness, Gaius 'walked in the truth.' Following on this he praises him for having received passing brethren in a friendly manner, thereby rendering a service to the truth they represented.⁴ Unhappily, this was not the case with Diotrephes, who, from a desire for personal supremacy, had received neither the brethren nor a letter written by the author,⁵ and had expelled from the church others who were willing to do so. It was to be hoped that Gaius would not follow his example.⁶ Verse 12 gives a glowing testimony to Demetrius, from which, however, we do not learn whether the writer means to recommend him to the hospitality of Gaius, or as a trustworthy ally in the church. The letter ends with the same formulæ as the Second Epistle.

The Gaius of the Third Epistle can be identified as little as the Diotrephes or the Demetrius, for, considering the frequency of the name, it would be almost childish to suppose that he was the same as the Gaius mentioned by Paul in

¹ Vv. 4-9.² Vv. 10 fol.³ Vv. 2-4.⁴ Vv. 5-8.⁵ Vv. 9 and 10.⁶ Ver. 11.

1. Corinthians¹ and Romans²; but when we consider that this was a time of which we know practically nothing, it would indeed be a marvel if he could be identified. Taking the Second Epistle into account, however, we seem justified in assuming that all three were imaginary persons (verse 11, for instance, does not fit the description of Gaius in vv. 2-6, in the least, and the tenses of 3, 5 fol. betray the hollowness of the assumed situation); thus the only object of the Epistle would appear to have been to urge as a sacred duty the cordial reception and entertainment of brethren travelling in the service of the Gospel, and to unmask the lust of power which at the expense of truth, and solely in order to shut out all external influences from its neighbourhood, did not fulfil this duty and spurned even the highest of all authorities.

2. We can only dispute the view that both Epistles spring from the same writer, if we consider the one to be the slavish imitation of the other, and in that case the decision as to whether 2. or 3. were the earlier could only be purely arbitrary. I hold it probable that they were written contemporaneously, for none but a Chancery clerk could have clung so closely to his epistolary formulæ as to give to two Epistles written at different periods an appearance so similar as that possessed by 2. and 3. John (with the exception of the verses dealing with the special subjects in each). They show the Johannine type in phrases like 'to know the truth,' 'to be of God,' 'to have God,' 'to have both the Father and the Son,'³ and also in such unimportant expressions as 'that your joy may be fulfilled.'⁴ The words of 3. 12, 'thou knowest that our witness is true,' remind us particularly of the Gospel,⁵ but both Epistles, and particularly the Second, are still more closely related to the First Epistle, for vv. 2. 4-9 are in reality nothing but a short extract from that Epistle, while the letter mentioned in 3.,⁶ written either to the whole Church or to a community, and which Diotrephes would not receive, would also seem to refer with great probability to the First

¹ i. 14. ² xvi. 23.

³ 2nd Epist. 1; cf. Gosp. viii. 32.

⁴ 3rd Epist. 11.

⁵ 2nd Epist. 9.

⁶ 2nd Epist. 12; cf. 1st Epist. i. 4.

⁷ v. 31 fol., viii. 13 fol., xix. 35, and esp. xxi. 25.

⁸ Ver. 9

Epistle. But it might just as easily be taken as referring to the Second, and in this case the fiction becomes unmistakable, for no one in real life would write an Epistle like 2. John to a community the ruler of which—as the writer himself knew and mentioned in a simultaneous letter to a personal friend in that community—would not receive his Epistle, but had actually put himself in a position of impious antagonism to him.

The indications as to the date of the Epistles are but scanty, though what we have said with regard to the First Epistle holds good of the Second; a somewhat later stage in the development of ecclesiastical orthodoxy is implied by the emphasis given to the injunction to 'abide in the teaching,' and the absolute condemnation of those who 'go onward.' As to the Third Epistle it is not necessary to follow Harnack in considering it as an important document dating from the period of the struggle of the old patriarchal mission-organisation with the individual communities and their tendency towards consolidation; but we may probably take Diotrephes as a representative of the monarchical aspirations in the communities, and of the mistrust of the wandering teachers which soon prevailed in the whole Church; we can therefore scarcely date our Epistles before the years 100–125.

The tradition tells us that the writer of 2. and 3. John was identical with the writer of 1. John and the Gospel of John. Many objections, however, have been raised against this. The two former, after all, stand much closer to one another than to the longer writings, and their resemblance to these latter may be explained by their mental dependence on them, and by the fact that their author may have spent a considerable period in the Johannine atmosphere. The shorter Epistles possess much that does not occur in 1. John and the Gospel: not merely the words *φιλοπρωτεύειν* and *μέλαν*, to which no one has the right to expect any parallels, but phrases like *ἐχάρην λίαν*,¹ *βλέπετε ἑαυτούς*,² *ἀπολαμβάνειν μισθὸν πληρὴν*,³ *συνεργοὶ γινώμεθά τινι*,³ all of which remind us of the Synoptics or of Paul. Even in the extract from the First Epistle in 2. 4–9 there are some remarkable differences, such

¹ 2nd Ep. 4 and 3rd Ep. 3.² 2nd Ep. 8.³ 3rd Ep. 8.

as the words *πλάνος* and *πλάνοι* in verse 7: the fact that the Antichrist is only spoken of in the singular¹; the mention of the danger of losing 'the things which have been wrought,'² the reference to the 'full reward,' and the excommunication of the man who 'goeth onward,' or who 'taketh the lead' (*προάγων*). Finally, when we consider the great difference between the epistolary garb of the First Epistle and that of the other two, and the fact that the latter found their way into the Canon later than the First Epistle and separately from it, we can at any rate understand that doubts might be entertained of the tradition which sought to ascribe all four writings to the same hand. On the other hand, the differences between the two shorter Epistles and the longer are not more considerable than between the latter and the Gospel. I see no reason left for ascribing the three Epistles of John to more than one author; if we may assume that he wrote the last two as a supplement a few years after the First Epistle—first, in the Second Epistle, to point out more particularly the duty of separation from the false teachers; then, in the Third, to give a forcible recommendation to a form of the practice of brotherly love which was specially important, though often entirely ignored or its necessity contested.

One question only remains: why the unknown writer, who was apparently well content to remain partially anonymous in the First Epistle, now reveals himself in the Second and Third; and, if so, why he does not come forward simply under his own name, but adopts a title which might mean anything, and therefore tells us next to nothing—the title of *Presbyter*. The first became necessary when instead of the sermon in epistolary form he chose the form of the occasional letter. But how can the vague title '*Presbyter*' be coupled in the nominative with the dative 'to Gaius'? This would only be possible if the person intended was known to everyone in the Christian world as the *Presbyter* *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, and perhaps better known by this title than by his own name. It is said that there was such an '*Elder*' of the name of John in the second century. Either this man is the writer of our Epistles, or some unknown person has appropriated his name in order to

¹ Verse 7.² Verse 8.

secure an adequate authority for his disciplinary instructions. Perhaps he had heard that some had placed his first epistle *ad acta*, and therefore determined to announce more definitely whose voice it was that had demanded a hearing. He attained his object. A hundred years later the shorter Epistles were always quoted as the Epistles of John wherever they were known.

For further particulars of this Presbyter see below, § 31.

BOOK II

THE APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT§ 21. *A General Survey of Apocalyptic Literature*

[Cf. F. Lücke's 'Versuch einer vollständigen Einleitung in die Offenbarung des Johannes' (1852); E. Schürer's 'Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi,' vol. iii. pp. 181-273; Wellhausen's 'Skizzen und Vorarbeiten,' vi. pp. 215-249 (1899); and for works of H. Gunkel and W. Bousset see next section. A good translation of the Jewish Apocalypses not contained in the Old Testament has been made by Kautzsch, in his 'Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des A. T.'s,' ii. pp. 177-528 (1900), with short commentaries and introductions; the general introduction to the first volume (pp. xx-xxiii) should also be consulted.]

WHILE the Epistolary literature of the New Testament was created by Christianity itself, that is by the great Christian Apostle Paul, without any dependence on existing models, and the Gospels and Acts were written in a form naturally arising from the needs of an historical religion—for we may suppose that even if no one had ever composed an historical book before, the Saviour would have been described in much this way to future generations—the Apocalyptic writings of the New Testament belong to a species of artistic composition which existed long beforehand, which grew up on Jewish soil and was finally adopted by the new religion without any essential modifications. It is true that only one such book, the Apocalypse of John, has found its way into the New Testament Canon (or has remained there permanently), but there are other works of the kind which have laid claim to a like

consideration, such as the Apocalypse of Peter,¹ and the 'Shepherd' of Hermas,² and this form of edifying literature was for centuries exceedingly popular in the widest Christian circles. Professional theologians made light of it, but the lower orders of the Christian population derived from it much stimulus to their imagination and material for their religious thought.

The name 'Apocalypse,' which many books of this class do not bear from the beginning, is generally applied to all those writings in which a human being tells the story of what had been imparted to him from heaven above, under circumstances of miracle, concerning those matters and problems of the other world which, though inaccessible to human reason, are of all the greater interest on that account to the pious heart. Apocalyptic elements are also frequently found in books of another class—e.g. in the Psalms of Solomon, in Jewish books of legends, and so on—and this naturally enough, for the Apocalypse does not merely represent a branch of *literature*, but rather a stage in the development of the Israelitish religion. The first great product of Apocalyptics was the Book of Daniel, written in the time of the Maccabees about the year 166 B.C.; all later examples drew from it, most of them consciously. It now finds its place among the Prophets of the Old Testament, and perhaps rightly so, for Apocalyptic literature is in reality the last manifestation of Old Testament Prophecy.

Prophecy found itself on the way to an Apocalyptic form as soon as, from Jeremiah onwards, it was compelled to abandon the direct action of man on man, and to influence its generation solely through the medium of literature. Ezekiel in the Captivity is already book-prophet from first to last. In other respects, too, he shows very strongly the characteristics of an age of decadence: few new ideas and none of the moral energy of the old stock, but in their place an imagination luxuriant enough, but running to waste in a tangle of barren weeds. Vague allegories exercise the ingenuity of the reader rather than guide his will in accordance with eternal law. The healthy bond between Prophecy and the living history of the

¹ See p. 240.

² Written at Rome about 140 A.D.

With the appearance of Jesus, this form of prophecy was in principle superseded. Jesus did not come forward under another's name, he spoke freely and without disguise—using images only to facilitate the understanding of his thought—he sought the means of realising the Messianic hopes, not in extravagant descriptions of blessedness to come, but in warfare against the false piety of Pharisaism, and in the establishment of a healthy relation between every child of God and its Father. And his Apostles followed his example, especially Paul 'the Apostle'; they laboured for the Gospel after the manner of the genuine Prophets, and we can only speak of a Pauline¹ or a Gospel² 'Apocalypse' *cum grano salis*, in so far as in the painting of the 'last days' some of their colours were taken from Jewish Apocalypics. But we could not expect that those Christians who as Jews had owed their spiritual edification mainly to Apocalypses should undergo a complete change of taste; and the general condition of things rather favoured the adoption of this form of religious literature on the part of the new religion, for not less eagerly were the Christians now looking forward to the Parusia of Christ than had the Jews in former times awaited the appearance of the Messiah. Soon, too, their condition became one of not less oppression and almost greater hopelessness than that of Israel in its worst days. Add to this that in all religiously inclined sections of the life-weary world of those days, and not in Jewish circles only, we may reckon upon finding a particular interest taken in books with an apparatus of mystery and enigmatical predictions concerning the end of all things. So it came about that the Apocalyptic *genre* was soon cultivated with eagerness by Christian authors also. Sometimes an old Jewish Apocalypse was recast from the Christian point of view, sometimes an entirely new one was written; and of these last the oldest that has come down to us is the Revelation of John.

¹ 2. Thess. ii. 1-12.

² Matt. xxiv.

§ 22. *The Revelation of John*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. xvi., by W. Bousset, ed. 5, 1896, his strong point the methodological sections in the Introduction (pp. 141-170). Hand-Commentar, vol. iv., 'Die johanneischen Schrifte,' by Holtzmann himself (ed. 2, 1893). The numerous special commentaries on Revelation, especially those of E. Hengstenberg (ed. 2, 1861), T. Kliefoth (1874), and H. Füller (1874) are more interesting to the student of Church history than instructive for the interpretation of the book itself. Since 1882 the interest of scholars has been one-sidedly applied to investigating the construction and date of the Apocalypse. Among the countless publications of this class (many of which were mere abortions) F. Spitta's 'Die Offenbarung des Johannes' (1889) is valuable for its contributions towards a better understanding of details. See also H. Gunkel's 'Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit' (1895), a work intended to create a new epoch in our understanding of Revelation.

1. The Apocalypse, which only slightly exceeds 1. Corinthians in bulk, used at one time to be much admired for its symmetrical construction, but in reality it is extremely difficult to summarise its contents briefly and yet with tolerable completeness. The first three verses form the superscription, declaring the work to be a Revelation which Jesus Christ had 'sent and signified' by the command of God through his angel to John, and dealing with the 'things which must shortly come to pass.' The book was intended for the 'servants of Jesus,' and they were to 'keep the things which were written therein.' Then follows a preface in which John, the transmitter of this revelation, addresses a solemn greeting to the 'seven churches which are in Asia,' while the next verse (i. 8) is actually put into the mouth of God. In verse 9 the writer begins the story of how he was seized by the Holy Ghost one 'Lord's day' on the island of Patmos, and received the charge to write down all that he was about to see and send the book to the Churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardes, Philadelphia and Laodicea. In seeking for the giver of the charge, he beheld standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks 'one like unto a son of man,' who

beast the dragon endows with all his power and might for two-and-forty months, and it makes war on the saints and is worshipped by all other dwellers on the earth. This, however, is in consequence of the deceitfulness of a second beast, who comes up out of the earth and has 'two horns like unto a lamb,' though he speaks like a dragon. By his wonderful signs he induces mankind actually to worship the image of the water-beast as divine, and to allow themselves to be marked with his name, which was contained in the number 'six hundred and sixty and six.' Meanwhile the Lamb, with his 'hundred and forty and four thousand' saints, his band of virgins, is standing on the mount of Zion,¹ and an angel proclaims aloud an eternal gospel, saying 'with a great voice': 'The hour of judgment is come.'² A second angel announces the fall of Babylon,³ a third utters a threat of eternal torment against the worshippers of the Beast and of his image,⁴ while to those who had died in the Lord, heavenly rest is promised. The Son of Man is already at hand, with the insignia of the world's judge, and the sickle begins its work upon the earth.⁵ Here the scene changes once more,⁶ and seven angels appear with the seven last plagues. As they step out of the heavenly temple they are given 'seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God,' which they pour out one by one, to the fearful destruction of mankind⁷; nevertheless, men do not repent, but gather themselves together at Harmagedon round the Dragon and the two beasts for the last fight with God. Here⁸ the seer unexpectedly turns his gaze towards Babylon—as in chap. xi. towards Jerusalem—Babylon, the synonym of Rome, the great harlot, whose deeds of shame and whose fall and destruction are described in much detail; a hymn of praise is raised in Heaven over the fall of Babel, and finally we are shown the triumphal progress of the Word of God, ending with the overthrow of the Beast and the false prophet, and the slaughter of all their confederates.⁹ Upon this we are briefly told¹⁰ of the thousand years during which the dragon,

¹ xiv. 1-5.⁴ Vv. 9-13.⁷ Ch. xvi.¹⁰ xx. 1-6.² xiv. 6 and 7.⁵ Vv. 14-20.⁸ xvii-xix. 10.³ xiv. 8.⁶ Ch. xv.⁹ xix. 1-21.

Satan, was to lie bound in the abyss, while the saints of Christ take part in the preliminary resurrection and hold sway with their master over the earth. But at the end of the thousand years Satan breaks forth once more¹ and gathers his host together, Gog and Magog, at the ends of the earth; but the danger does not last long, and he is hurled once and for all into the lake of fire: upon this the day of *universal* resurrection and of judgment dawns, which puts an end for ever to death and to the kingdom of the dead. Then we have a description² of the glories of the new heaven and the new earth, and especially of the New Jerusalem, and with this the Apocalyptic material is exhausted, and the last verses³ form a literary ending to correspond with chapter i. The ascending scale of authorities which vouch for the trustworthiness of this inviolable book—John himself, the Angel who conducts him, and finally Jesus Christ—is once more pointed out, and the longing for the Parusia, for the coming of the Lord Jesus, is fanned to fever-heat.

2. The connection between this Apocalypse and those of Jewish origin is unmistakable. In both we find the same concentration of interest upon the 'last things,' the same promises of a speedy revolution in favour of the righteous, the same confusion between things past and things to come,⁴ the same fantastic and magical pictures of approaching events, and the same hesitating and partial interpretation of all manner of 'Mysteries'⁵ and 'Wisdoms.'⁶ Here, however, the recipient of the revelation is not a man of hoary antiquity, but a Christian, by name John. He reckons himself among the Prophets,⁷ and demands a respectful recognition for his book,⁸ and of course he has no doubt as to the correctness of his ideas on the subject of the things to come. Nevertheless, the old discussion as to whether the book can best be interpreted from the point of view of contemporary, ecclesiastical (or rather, imperial) history, or from that of Eschatology, is entirely behind the times. Any extravagance could

¹ xx. 7-15.

² xxii. 6-21.

³ i. 20, x. 7, xvii. 5 and 7.

⁷ xxii. 9 and 18, i. 3.

² xxi. 1-xxii. 5.

⁴ E.g., xi. 2, xiii. 2-5, xvii. 9 fol.

⁵ xiii. 18, xvii. 9.

⁶ i. 3, xxii. 9 and 18 fol.

find its authority in this book, so long as people start from the false assumption that the author's visions had already been, or would hereafter be literally fulfilled. The Apocalypse of John was taken out of the sphere to which it belonged, and, simply because it had happened to remain within the New Testament, was judged by quite a different standard from that which was applied to similar works, like the Book of Enoch, 4th Ezra, or the 'Shepherd' of Hermas. Science, however, cannot tolerate such a proceeding, and while she is quite ready to acknowledge the peculiarities of this Christian work and the influence which the new faith exerted over the imagination of the writer, she cannot ignore the obvious fact that here, as in all Apocalyptic writings, a picture of future events has been constructed out of the hopes and wishes of a part at least of the Christianity of the time, and with the help of its accumulated store of hatreds, loves, hopes, ideals and fanciful imaginings. For who is there who seriously maintains to-day the idea of a thousand year Kingdom of God on earth? No, the enduring religious value of the book lies in the energy of faith which it displays in the splendid certainty of its conviction that God's cause must ever be the best, and is inseparable from the cause of Jesus Christ, and in the pithy and striking aphorisms scattered through it,² which have long since become an integral part of our literature of edification; but it would be wholly inadmissible to treat the details of the writer's fancy as an authentic source either for a history of the past or of the future.

The Apocalypse of John is, moreover, the artificial product of study and reflection; its ecstatic visions are merely literary trappings, not actual experiences. Otherwise we should be obliged to assume that the writing of it had always, by some miraculous means, been simultaneous with the author's seeing and hearing, for in xxii. 9 the book appears to be already finished when the visions come to an end. The position of the seer is not made quite clear: sometimes he is in heaven, sometimes on the earth,⁴ and the artificiality of the situation is no less significantly shown by the fact that he frequently

¹ xx. 1-6. ² E.g., ii. 10^e, iii. 11 and 19-21, xii. 11, xiv. 13 and xxi. 4.

iv. 1

⁴ Chaps. x and xi.

relapses from the past tense, which alone would have suited his presumable experiences, into the future.¹ That he also professes to have *seen* things which are not to be seen under any circumstances, such as the *voice* of the Son of Man,² or the way in which the four beasts around the throne of God cried Holy, Holy, Holy, 'having no rest day and night,'³ is at most a defect in expression; for the words 'I saw' introduce the whole body of his experiences from the moment his visions begin. But it is more curious that he should have seen all four sides of the throne of God equally well from where he stood, as again in chap. xxi. he sees the city which is equal in length, breadth and height, or that in chap. v. he should have perceived at once that the book sealed with seven seals was written 'within and on the back'—that is, on both sides of the leaves. That in i. 16 the Son of Man is described as holding seven stars in his right hand is apparently forgotten in the next verse, for there he lays this right hand kindly upon the seer, who had fallen down 'as one dead.' Images like that of the Son of Man, out of whose mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword,⁴ or that of the lamb with ten horns and seven eyes, standing 'as though it had been slain,'⁵ can scarcely be the products of a genuine vision, but were rather put together and written down without any aid from sight. And are the 'seven spirits of God,' which appear in v. 6 as the seven eyes of the Lamb, to be counted twice over, seeing that we had already recognised them in iv. 5 (and cf. i. 4) in the 'seven lamps of fire burning before the throne'? Explanatory glosses like those just mentioned, or like verse v. 8, 'bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints,'⁶ are ill suited to the tone of a visionary; they show the hand of the man of letters who tries by incidental hints to make his technical terms more intelligible.

The whole construction of the book, in short, is, in spite of numerous inconsistencies, far too elaborate, with its successive heptades of seals, trumpets and bowls, the corresponding three and a half years and three and a half days of chap. xi., and

¹ iv. 9 fol., ix. 6. Note, e.g., the change in tense between xi. 2-10 and the three following verses.

² i. 15.

³ iv. 8.

⁴ i. 16.

⁵ v. 6.

⁶ f. xi. 8.

the general partiality for numbers and mathematical figures of all sorts—all of which are taken from the pre-existent Apocalyptic material:—God's ways are not fashioned according to the rules of a cheap mysticism of numbers, and the visions even of a sick man such arts of calculation do not occur. We do not thereby deny that the author had had visions, or that they had made a powerful impression upon him and had appeared as a divine injunction laid upon him to impart his own consolation and his own knowledge to the rest of the brethren all over the world. The man who wrote the Apocalypse believed in his own words with absolute trust but behind his visions lie Apocalyptic studies which had excited and enriched his mind and his imagination, and *after* those visions lie still more of them. The Apocalypse is not a pamphlet hurriedly committed to paper in the glowing excitement of a night, but a learned work, over the composition of which the writer often pondered long, and to which he certainly added many finishing touches after it was completed. The framework, consisting of the superscription and the farewell greeting, were probably added when all the rest was finished.

3. We should, however, do the writer grave injustice if we assumed that his motive for the elaboration of his work was a desire to win the name of Prophet by an Apocalyptic work of art, as though he were incapable of deserving it in the usual way. His seven Epistles to the Churches¹ show how carefully he had studied the condition of those communities which were accessible to him, how accurate was his knowledge of their merits and their shortcomings, and how earnestly he set about the task of improving them. He knows the temptations to which the patience of some was exposed by their perpetual sufferings for Christ's sake, and fears that they may even yet lose hope; and he has misgiving lest others should be found unprepared on the day of the Lord's return. He himself is convinced that the Parusia will take place in the near future and that there is short space left for repentance; hence he seizes his pen to announce in the name of Christ the approaching day of decision, bringing with it eternal bliss or eternal torment—hoping

¹ Ch. ii. fol.

thereby to kindle new life among the followers of Christ. By means of the rich apocalyptic setting in which he clothes his fundamental idea, and by the use of which he proves himself to be a true child of his age, a sharer alike in its taste and in its lack of the critical instinct, his book did succeed in attracting attention, in producing an overwhelming effect, and in exerting a strong influence upon the Church. He did not in any way aspire to interpret theological problems, or to start a new Christology, or a new doctrine of salvation; only occasionally are we able to perceive how he thought about these questions, and then not very clearly; while the only *new* matter that he has to communicate concerns the course of the next and latest period of history.

What strikes us perhaps most of all, when we remember the stress laid upon the loyalty of Christians to the powers that be, in Romans and 1. Peter, and the recognition of their 'restraining' power in 2. Thessalonians,¹ is the burning hatred which the Apocalypse displays towards the empire of Rome. It regards this empire as the direct work of Satan, and the city of Rome as the pinnacle of godlessness on earth, and the writer cannot dwell long enough upon the description of the judgment of Rome and the rejoicing of the saints over her fall.² Rome is in his eyes the earthly Antichrist, and the Cæsar-worship that had been introduced there the summit of all blasphemy,³ while the head that was mortally wounded, but recovered from the death-stroke, is to him a caricature of Christ: cp. the *ὡς ἐσφαγμένην* of xiii. 3 with the same words as applied to the Lamb in v. 6. Till Rome was destroyed the reign of the Messiah on earth could not be established: its fall, however, was soon to be accomplished, though not before God had endeavoured by repeated revelations of his supernatural power to warn the world of its approaching fate, and both by words⁴ and deeds to urge mankind to repentance. He prepares them for the approaching annihilation by plagues—in this case three times seven—so that no one can plead the excuse of having fallen upon his fate unwarned.

¹ Ch. ii.² Chaps. xviii. and xix.³ xiii. 1, 5 fol., 8, 12-17.⁴ Ch. xi.

For it is unquestionable that the writer wished, between chaps. iv. and xvii., to trace the course of the immediate future, of the 'last things,' in chronological sequence, and along an uninterrupted, even line; the order of his narration (in other words, of his vision) is always also the order of fulfilment. This is, however, disputed by the supporters of the 'recapitulative' interpretation—from Victorinus down to B. Weiss—who assert that the same periods and events are repeated throughout the Apocalypse, only in different garb, so that large sections of the book are to be understood 'as juxtaposed rather than consecutive.

Certainly it is undeniable that the advance from earlier to later events is often imperfect: the breaking of the sixth seal, for instance, in chap. vi., is followed by almost more appalling consequences than is the sounding of the first trumpet in chap. viii., or the pouring forth of the first bowl in chap. xvi., while the crisis in vi. 17—'for the great day of their wrath is come'—seems to be identical with that which follows the sounding of the sixth trumpet in x. 7, or that of xiv. 7; and xiv. 8 is also identical with xviii. 2. But from such occasional faults of composition we must not draw any too hasty conclusions. The writer's skill had its limits, and his imaginative material was sometimes too much for him. It would, however, be truly wonderful if this were not the case, for if the Apocalypse satisfied even the lowest claims of dramatic æsthetics, it would stand alone among numerous examples of its class. Moreover, nothing is really parallel in the various parallel acts which have been constructed out of it but the number of scenes and the effect (or ineffectiveness) of the plagues: when, for instance, at the second trumpet-blast¹ a *third part* of the sea is turned to blood and a *third part* of the creatures in and upon the sea are destroyed, while at the pouring out of the second bowl² *the sea* becomes blood and *every* living creature that was in it dies, the intention of gradation is surely unmistakable. Altogether, we should be obliged to credit the writer with a strange indifference towards the subject-matter of his visions, and to exaggerate the idea of their 'figurativeness' beyond all measure, if we assume that

¹ viii. 8.² xvi. 3.

he is capable of describing identical events from the Last Days under different forms. Apart from the fact that he nowhere gives us any sign of an interruption in his ecstasy, and that the unprejudiced reader is compelled to recognise an unbroken succession of miraculous events, this hypothesis—which is excusable in Victorinus (about 300)—implies a complete misconception of the very nature of Apocalyptics. The apocalyptic writer would be incapable—in spite of his delight in mystery—of representing the same event under different images, simply because in his eyes it was not a question of images, but of realities; he might indeed put on the same level such things as seals, trumpets and bowls, though I prefer to think that there is a perfectly well-considered gradation even in these instruments, but he could not treat in the same way a victorious Parthian campaign, the burning of a third part of the earth and its trees, and the ‘noisome and grievous sore’ upon mankind.

The Apocalypse is, in fact, not a poem or an allegory; rather the figurative matter in it is intended to be taken very seriously. At any rate the writer was not conscious of the boundary line between the metaphorical and the actual, for the innumerable similes which he employs for purposes of illustration—e.g. ix. 5, ‘And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when it striketh a man’—surely do not sound as though he were using the language of unreality. The key of the pit of the abyss is no more ‘merely figurative’ than the lake of fire and brimstone, in spite of the fact that in xxi. 8 this last is interpreted as the ‘second death;’ while in accordance with the spirit of the book, the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God do not cease to burn merely because the writer recognises in them the seven Spirits of God. Nor would the seventh seal and the seventh trumpet have any content left unless we looked upon the succeeding heptade as the unfolding of this content; while the conformity of vi. 17 with x. 7 and xiv. 7 is best explained by supposing that although after the breaking of six seals, the end of the world seemed to be at hand, God’s mercy tries new and sharper warnings, once and again, which the much-afflicted and already half-despairing saints must bear in patience. It

was not merely love of romancing that induced the writer to give us so many different scenes from the transition period, before the longed-for catastrophe—(and still less may we, contrary to his intention, reduce their number by about a third through a process of compression)—but because he believed, saw, that is, knew for certain that the Kingdom of the Lamb on earth would not be established so suddenly as many wished it to be: that it had yet to be preceded by a soul-stirring tragedy of several acts and many scenes. The reproach that hope had been deceived, prophecies left unfulfilled, that the End had been often announced and had never appeared, could only be met—unless the ‘last things’ were to be postponed to an infinitely distant future, and the recent proclamation of them were to be disavowed—by constructing a scheme for these ‘last things’ of ample proportions, in which at various points catastrophe enters, but, as the reader learns, is *an* end, but not yet *the* end.

4. The Apocalypse undoubtedly springs from Jewish-Christian circles. The writer is not only so familiar with the Old Testament—and moreover with every part of it in equal degree—that his points of contact with it are almost incessant, but he lives in the very midst of all that apparatus of Apocalyptic ideas heaped together from later Judaism, from the Old Testament, but also from other sources, such as Babylono-Persian mythology and Greek poetry, and sometimes even prides himself upon interpreting it correctly for the first time.¹ He speaks of the ‘Gentiles’ in the tone of the born Jew,² and the fanatical colouring of his wrath against Rome, the new Babylon, is also specifically Jewish. He hails the Messiah as the ‘Lion of the tribe of Judah,’ the ‘Root of David,’³ and with all his hatred against his unbelieving countrymen, the name ‘Jew’ remains in his eyes a title of honour. But he is still more fully betrayed by his language. He understands Hebrew (see, for instance, his translation of Balaam into Nicolaus in ii. 14 fol.),⁴ is familiar with the Old

¹ E.g., Zach. iv. in xi. 4; Ezek. xxxviii. fol. in xx. 8; the myths of the fight with the dragon and of the seven-headed beast in Chaps. xii., xiii. and xvii.

² xi. 2, xx. 3 and 8.

³ v. 5.

iii. 14, ‘the Amen,’ ix. 11, xvi. 16.

Testament in the original tongue or else in an Aramaic version, and his book is written throughout in the Jewish-Greek, a language which is not wanting in clearness, nor occasionally in a certain rhythm and force, but which in its barbarous violations of the rules of Greek grammar and syntax would only be explicable as coming from a man who did not use it as his mother tongue—whose thoughts ran in a Semitic groove. Certain portions, such as chap. xii., give us the impression of being translated almost literally from the Hebrew, and as no one would probably care nowadays to assert as much of the whole Apocalypse—of passages like i. 9-11, for instance, or of the seven Epistles—the fact that no difference of *style* is perceptible at any point is all the more remarkable. The text has certainly come down to us very much corrupted, but most of the variants owe their origin to the desire of later copyists to make the book more readable for the cultivated Greek. The Apocalypse will co-ordinate a participle and a finite verb by means of the definite article—e.g. ii. 20,¹ ἡ λυγροῦσα αὐτὴν προφήτην καὶ διδάσκει . . ., and still more strongly in i. 4 and 8: ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, a title which is treated as indeclinable, e.g. ἀπὸ ὁ ὢν etc. Appositions in the nominative are made to every oblique case,² and according to Hebrew custom the oblique forms of αὐτός are added pleonastically to participles and relatives.³ Phrases like ποιήσω αὐτοὺς ἵνα ἤξουσιν,⁴ the confusion of moods and tenses,⁵ or of genders,⁶ the use, or rather misuse, of prepositions,⁷ the total absence of the instrumental dative, the place of which is supplied by ἐν,⁸ and a construction which makes no attempt at the Greek form of period, and which can hardly accomplish dependent clauses except when intro-

¹ Also i. 5 and ii. 9. ² E.g., i. 5, ii. 13 and 20, iii. 12, ix. 14, xx. 2.

³ E.g., ii. 7, τῷ νικῶντι δώσω αὐτῷ, and iii. 8, ἣν οὐδεὶς δύναται κλεῖσαι αὐτήν, cf. xii. 6, ὅπου ἔχει ἐκεῖ.

⁴ iii. 9.

⁵ E.g., iii. 9: ἵνα προσκυνήσουσιν καὶ γνώσωσιν.

⁶ E.g., iv. 1, ἡ φωνὴ . . . λέγων, iv. 8, ζῶα ἐν καθ' ἐν αὐτῶν ἔχων.

⁷ E.g., ἐπὶ with καθῆσθαι, used with all cases indiscriminately; and ἐκ or ἀπὸ with the Passive instead of ὑπό.

⁸ E.g., xiii. 8, ἐν μαχαίρῃ ἀποκτείνειν.

duced by $\delta\varsigma$ or $\delta\tau\iota$:—these are all signs of a Semitic habit of writing.

But the question remains as to whether the Jewish Christianity of the Apocalypse has also a dogmatic significance, i.e. should be taken as anti-Pauline, as Judaistic. The Tübingen school, especially G. Volkmar, assert that Paul is attacked in the Apocalypse with burning hatred; that it is he to whom the 'first apostles' of ii. 3 refer, for whose rejection the Ephesians are so highly commended, and that the writer's mention in ii. 24 of those 'which know not the deep things of Satan' is no less than an ironical citation of 1. Cor. ii. 10, turned against the followers of Paul. Well, the fact that the foundation-stones of the New Jerusalem are described in xxi. 14 as bearing the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb is certainly a proof that the writer did not take much notice of Paul, who according to 1. Cor.¹ did not belong to the Twelve; but to ignore him in such a case, to place him below the Twelve Apostles, is not by any means the same thing as to brand him as Antichrist. The Apocalypse itself is entirely devoid of anti-Pauline polemics, and we are only justified in describing its Christianity as one not distinctly or consciously dependent on or influenced by Paul. The writer was no child, no disciple, of Paul, but still less a Judaist fanatically devoted to the Law. The preference given to Palestine, Jerusalem and the twelve tribes of Israel in his future Kingdom bears the proper Judaistic stamp so little that one might even credit the writer of Romans ix.-xi. with the same hopes. That Jewish Chauvinism which considered none but the seed of Abraham worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven and of eternal blessedness is entirely foreign to the Apocalypse: it declares unequivocally that salvation was intended for all men; God's earthly communities are represented before His throne by 24 and not merely 12 Elders, and according to v. 9 the Lamb had purchased with his blood 'men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation,' with which the picture of vii. 9 fol.² entirely agrees. And as, on the one hand, all nations are represented among the martyrs for the name of Christ—for the important point was not to be a Jew, but to

¹ xv. 5.

² Cf. xxi. 24 fol., xxii. 2.

have been inscribed in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world¹—so on the other hand the Apocalypse expects nothing for the bearer of the name of Jew as such, and calls the unbelieving Jews in ii. 9 merely a (or the) 'synagogue of Satan.'

But the freedom from legal bondage to which the Apocalypse bears witness is just as undeniable as its universalism; except for the prohibition to eat meat sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication,²—which must remind every reader of the Apostolic Decree of Acts xv. 28 fol.—the writer is unwilling to 'cast any other burden'³ upon his readers. In the Kingdom of the New Jerusalem there is no temple,⁴ and the word circumcision is not once mentioned throughout the book. That form of Antinomianism which chaps. ii. and iii. contend against, the writer of 1. Cor. would also have contended against to the death. It is true that the Apostle who wrote Philippians iii. 4-11 could never have expressed the undoubted right of a 'remnant' of Israel to salvation in so mechanical a way as chap. vii. here expresses it—Galatians iii. 28 ('there can be neither Jew nor Greek') is certainly a more lofty point of view than Rev. ii. 9 or iii. 9. The peculiarities of the Pauline theology are, moreover, entirely lacking; by 'faith' the Apocalypse understands a steadfast, patient endurance, and it looks upon a man's *works*⁵—of which faith was certainly the loftiest—as the point on which his salvation depended. The relation between this Jewish idea and that of predestination remains uncertain; the writer would probably have thought of them as harmonised by the presence of God.

The chief characteristic of the figure of Christ in the Apocalypse is that the Saviour is for the most part represented in the form of a Lamb (*ἀρνίον*), which had shed its blood and been slain, but had then, as the 'firstborn of the dead,'⁶ entered upon the period of universal sway. Christ's death, his present and especially his future glory, are religious facts of fundamental importance to the Apocalypse. But we learn

¹ iii. 5, xiii. 8, xvii. 8, xx. 12 and 15, xxi. 27.

² ii. 14 and 20.

³ ii. 24.

⁴ xxi. 22.

⁵ From ii. 2 to xxii. 12.

⁶ i. 5.

nothing very definite concerning the necessity for and the significance of his death, and nothing whatever about his life on earth. Once, in a context that reminds us of Matt. xi. 27, the writer applies the name 'Word of God'¹ to the crucified Heavenly King; in two passages it is uncertain whether the divine titles refer to the Father or to the Son; but the distinction between the two is at any rate to be strictly maintained, for in the very first verse the 'Revelation of Jesus Christ' is given to Christ by God, while in iii. 14 he is spoken of as part of the 'creation of God,' even though as its beginning (*ἀρχή*). In ethical matters especially, the author of the Apocalypse has no more connection with Paul than every Christian of that time must have had; the idea of reward plays a great part in his mind, and he gives a particularly high value to the negative virtues; next to the martyrs, the ascetics form the highest class of believers, for we are told in xiv. 4 that 'they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,' his 'firstfruits,' were *virgins*: that is, 'an hundred and forty and four thousand that had been purchased out of the earth and were not defiled with women.' And it is highly probable that a distinction corresponding to this attitude of mind is intended between the *saints* and those that *feared the name of God*, mentioned in xi. 18. Thus, then, in spite of many points of contact with the Pauline phraseology²—which hardly suffice to establish the idea that the writer had made a study of the Pauline literature—the Christianity of the Apocalypse can be called neither Pauline nor anti-Pauline; so far as any religious views or conceptions can be discovered in it outside the circle of eschatological ideas, they can be explained as the natural development—possibly influenced indirectly by the results of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles—of the primitive form in which the Gospel converted Jews into believers; the writer would have felt himself quite at home, for instance, in the Roman community of about the year 58.³

5. From the time of Justin⁴ onwards the Apocalypse was attested by the Church as the work of the Apostle John, i.e.

¹ xix. 13. ² 1 Cor. xv. 20; Col. i. 15 and 18; 2 Cor. v. 17.

³ See § 8, par. 5.

⁴ About 150 A.D.

John the son of Zebedee, and fifty years later it was known that the Apostle John had seen these visions when exiled, for the Gospel's sake, to the island of Patmos. But also about the year 200 A.D. a distinguished theologian, Caius, disputed the Apostolic origin of the Apocalypse, declaring it rather to be a worthless forgery by the heretic Cerinthus; and he found supporters in this view among the Christians of the East, even though only among certain learned individuals. The 'Alogi' of Asia Minor maintained a similar view, and in the school of Alexandria we find that from about the year 260 onwards the writer was held to be, not the *Apostle* John, but another celebrated John of Ephesus. If we add to this that the Emperor who banished him is generally mentioned as Domitian, but sometimes also as Claudius, Nero or Trajan, while some writers avoid giving any name at all, and that the place from which he was banished is Rome, according to some, and Ephesus, according to others, it will be seen that it is not possible to plead a uniform and trustworthy tradition. Even though the arguments of Caius against the Apostolic origin of the Apocalypse, prompted as they are by dogmatic motives, need impress us little, the equally prejudiced arguments of Churchmen on the other side must also be disregarded; the 'tradition' had in fact derived, or rather deduced, all its own knowledge about the book from the book itself, combining it with a little outside 'knowledge' as well; so that we must set aside all this pseudo-evidence and go to the only fountain-head, the book itself, for its own testimony.

The writer speaks of himself as John,¹ as Christ's servant,² and as a 'brother and partaker' with his readers 'in the tribulation and kingdom,'³ and according to i. 4 these readers were the seven communities of the province of Asia. Hence we must assume that he was an Asiatic Christian, which was already probable from the fact that he took a particular interest in the seven churches of Asia,⁴ and had an accurate knowledge of their circumstances. That he had only migrated thither from Palestine as an old man may possibly be gathered from his style, but the hypothesis is not necessary, for the language in which he writes and the attachment which he

¹ i. 1, 4, 9, xxii. 2.² i. 1.³ i. 9.⁴ i. 4.

shows to the Holy Land would be very natural even in a Jew of the Dispersion, who had had a strictly Jewish education and training. The name John was a common one among Jews: we hear of a Christian of the name, John Mark, in the New Testament¹ as well as of the son of Zebedee; we know from other sources that in the Ephesian community at least the Jewish Christian element was strongly represented, and what right have we to assume that the writer of the Apocalypse was necessarily the most famous man of his name? Or will anyone seriously assert the Apostle's authorship on the ground that he was surnamed by Jesus, according to Mark iii. 17, 'Son of thunder,' and that this name seems especially to fit the Apocalyptic writer?—as though a temperament of that sort were of such rare occurrence in those times! If the 'Lord's day' of verse i. 10 is part of the figurative setting, the same may be said of the alleged scene of the visions, the island of Patmos²; and moreover the writer says nothing of any banishment, while the 'word of God and the testimony of Jesus' for which he went to Patmos might easily refer to the contents of the book itself,³ to receive which he had betaken himself to the lonely island. It might seem natural then, if so many of the writer's statements concerning his experiences—his ecstasy, his seeing and hearing, and his conversations with the angel—are to be regarded as apocalyptic form, to make no distinctions, and to look upon the name of the writer too as imaginary. In that case a great man must have been meant, the only man, in fact, of whom an Asiatic Christian could have thought in reading the bare name 'John'; and, supposing the Apostle John had ever been known in Asia Minor, then this Apostle may well be understood. But the book is equally devoid of indications either that the writer wished to be taken for, or that he actually was, the Apostle. Not a syllable points to the Apostleship of this John; even when Jesus speaks to him there is no mention of their former intercourse, and in xxi. 14 the writer speaks of the 'twelve Apostles of the Lamb' certainly not in the tone of one who belonged to their number or could possibly belong to it. Nor may we bring forward the argu-

¹ Acts xii. 12 etc.² i. 9.³ i. 2.

ment that he addresses his readers in the tone of one conscious of possessing the highest authority. However high an opinion he has of his book,¹ it is not because of his own high position in the Church, but because his prophecy is genuine, his words 'faithful and true.' He demands his hearing as a Prophet² who had been found worthy to receive the revelations of Jesus Christ through his angel, and he does not set up any other claim: it is not he, for instance, but the Son of Man, who criticises the seven churches. Now the Prophet regards himself as only the accidental vessel in which a heavenly wisdom is offered to the faithful; the withdrawal of the person and of everything personal into the background, which in a real letter is impossible, is here demanded by the exigencies of the literary *genre*, and we cannot, therefore, be careful enough in drawing our conclusions, especially those *e silentio*. But so long as it is not proved that every Apocalypse must of necessity be pseudonymous,—and such an assertion is preliminarily refuted by the 'Shepherd' of Hermas,—we have no right to make the arbitrary assumption that our Apocalypse was written under a false name. It alone, without the existence of the tradition, would never suggest the idea that its writer was one of the Twelve Apostles, or a patriarchal Head-Pastor of Asia, or in fact more than a Prophet, who, at the time when his book was first circulated, had already been working long and fruitfully among the Asiatic communities.

6. The writer of the Apocalypse, in fact, does not become mysterious until we begin to examine the curious relation borne by his book to the rest of the 'Johannine' writings—a relation which presents the most marked divergencies on the one hand, and on the other certain indisputable signs of connection. The divergencies are now almost universally recognised, in spite of the tradition, which would not hear of any but Apostolic writers within the limits of the New Testament. The writer of the Apocalypse wrote neither the Gospel nor either of the Epistles, nor is his indebtedness to them discoverable in any part of the Apocalypse. As it was generally felt even by the instinct of those early times, seer and evangelist differed from one another absolutely in

¹ xxii. 18 fol.

² xxii. 6.

vocabulary, style, ideas and point of view. 'Jerusalem,' for instance, is always spelt by the Gospel *Ἱεροσόλυμα*, by the Apocalypse *Ἱερουσαλήμ*; the Gospel is free from the rude Semitisms of the Apocalypse, which on its side reminds us nowhere of the quite peculiar style of John; the antitheses between light and darkness, God and the world, love and hate do not appear at all in the Apocalypse, and the latter never speaks of 'abiding in' anything, still less of being 'born of God,' 'of the Spirit,' or of 'being of God.' The Apocalypse speaks of Jesus as a Lamb innumerable times, but merely makes use of the word *ἀρνίον* for it without any addition, while the Gospel has *ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*.

Finally, the theological attitude of the Gospel is almost diametrically opposed to that of the Apocalypse. For the latter, the Jew who is worthy of the name is the faithful Christian,¹ whereas for the former the word Jew is merely a shameful epithet branding the nation which had shed the blood of Christ; the eschatological hopes to which the soul of the seer clings with passionate longing retire so far into the background in the Gospel that one might almost doubt their existence, and the visions of the future with their highly sensual colouring would hardly have been approved of by the Evangelist, with his tendency towards spiritualising all things. Nor should we fail to observe the fact that in the Apocalypse the writer names himself without any circumlocution, while in the other Johannine writings this is partially avoided in various ways. The professional apologist of course finds it possible to explain away all these difficulties as though they were mere child's play: the Apostle John had undergone considerable development, he urges, and had taken less pains, besides, to write correct Greek in the Apocalypse than to give a true rendering of what he saw (a melancholy theory, as though truth had seemed less necessary to him in writing the Gospel!); but, nevertheless, it is one of the most assured results of New Testament criticism that not another line from the hand of the writer of the Apocalypse has been preserved to us in the New Testament, least of all in the Gospel of John; for if the Apocalypse is the most Jewish book of the New Testament,

¹ ii. 9, iii. 9.

the Fourth Gospel is certainly the most anti-Jewish, the most opposed to the whole circle of Jewish interests and ideas, the furthest removed from the Jewish atmosphere.

At the present day, however, the need is rather to emphasise the opposite fact, that of *the signs of relationship* between the Apocalypse, and the Gospel and Epistles of John. Bousset¹ has collected a body of material which proves that such a connection exists even in minor peculiarities of language; favourite Johannine phrases like *μαρτυρία* and *μαρτυρεῖν* are also of frequent occurrence in the Apocalypse—though with the addition of the words *μαρτύριον* and *μάρτυς*, which are again unknown to the Gospel; and the Johannine similes of the water of life, the vine, the shepherd, and the bride, are all to be found in the Apocalypse, though always with certain peculiar differences of meaning or of expression; *ὁψις* occurs throughout the New Testament only in the Fourth Gospel² and the Apocalypse,³ *σφάζειν* only in the latter and the First Epistle of John.⁴ Christ is extolled as having ‘overcome the world’ only in the Gospel⁵ and the Apocalypse; the victory of the Christian in like manner only in the Apocalypse and the First Epistle. The words ‘her children’ and ‘this teaching’ in Rev. ii. 23 and 24 remind us of 2. John 4 and 10, while the expression which occurs so frequently in the Apocalypse,⁶ to ‘keep the word’ or the ‘commandment’ of Jesus or God, has numerous exact parallels only in the Gospel and the First Epistle. The name ‘Word of God’ as applied to Jesus in Rev. xix. 13⁷ is probably not synonymous with the *Logos* idea implied in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, but the phrase ‘as I also have received of my Father’ in Rev. ii. 27 is the very language used by the Johannine Christ in John x. 18, and it is only in these two books, again, that the Saviour is spoken of as a *Lamb*. These points of detail, however, are not sufficient to assist us in determining the author of the Apocalypse, nor when we weigh them carefully can they be said to favour the assumption that either of the parties concerned was under literary obligations

¹ Meyer, vol. xvi. pp. 206–8.

² i. 16.

³ iii. 12.

⁴ iii. 8, 10, xii. 17, xiv. 12 etc.

⁵ xi. 44, vii. 24.

⁶ xvi. 33.

⁷ See p. 276.

to the other; they are perhaps best explained on the supposition that Gospel, Epistles and Apocalypse grew up on the same soil, in a church in which a peculiar religious language and world of ideas had established themselves at the time, but without injury to freedom in other respects. But it is only in dealing with the Gospel that we shall be able to turn this suggestion to account; here we cannot go beyond the result already attained, that according to the self-testimony of the Apocalypse, its author was a teacher of Asia Minor named John.

7. Now, *when* did this John produce his book? No conclusions can safely be drawn from the names of the communities, for the fact that the greater number of them are not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament does not prove that they might not have been founded, in the same way as Colossæ and Laodicea, as early as the time of Paul. A relatively late assignment is rather favoured by the fact that the memory of Paul seems to have died away in these communities; but was it really imperative that Jesus should remind the Ephesians of the man who had won them to his name, and even, perhaps, quote a fragment of Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans, in the letter addressed to that community? That it is impossible to *prove* any employment of the Pauline Epistles we have already pointed out;¹ but the parallels between the Apocalypse and the eschatological discourses in the Synoptic Gospels are more remarkable, although we cannot assert any actual *dependence* on one side or the other; and beside Mark xiii. 2, Rev. xi. 1 fol. even makes the more primitive impression. But one *point d'appui* does remain to us in our efforts towards an assignment: in the Apocalypse Rome is reckoned as the deadly enemy of the new faith: she is drunken with the blood of the martyrs; a Pergamenian Christian is mentioned by name who had sealed his faith with his death, and not he alone, but many others; in the writer's eyes, in fact, the Church has definitely become a Church of Martyrs.² Now, such a tone is not to be explained solely on the ground of the Neronian horrors of the year 64, and of the occasional persecutions on the part of 'those set in authority,' to which

¹ P. 276.

² ii. 13.

even the Christians of Paul's time had been exposed in Asia Minor. In Rev. vi. 10 the martyrs not only cry to God 'How long dost thou leave our blood unavenged?' but they are consoled with the answer that 'their fellow-servants and their brethren which should be killed even as they were' must first have fulfilled their course. The Church was thus prepared for systematic persecution until the end of the world; perhaps at the moment when the Apocalypse was written a fresh outburst of persecuting fury was seen to be imminent. But such alarms would have been mere extravagance before the last years of Domitian (81-96), and therefore the time between 95 and 100 is probably the earliest at which we can possibly place the book. And this assignment is rendered still more acceptable by the picture given in the Apocalypse of the condition of the Christian communities. Ephesus had forsaken its 'first love'¹; Sardes was all but dead, and only possessed 'a few names which did not defile their garments,'² while in Laodicea spiritual life had become wholly dead. And it was not only a question of the unconscious dropping of the old enthusiasm, of a growing secularisation; heretics, too, had made their way into the churches—Balaamites and Nicolaitans (and the prophetess Jezebel?)—who actually taught Antinomianism and Libertinism.³ Who, then, should these false teachers be, if not those *Gnostics* whom we have already seen attacked in 1. John, Jude and 2. Peter, especially as they boast of a *knowledge* that reaches down to the 'deep things of Satan'⁴?

These indications in favour of an assignment of the Apocalypse to the year 100 or thereabouts, are counter-balanced by others which point towards the time before the year 70. Most of the arguments brought forward in this case, however, are of no value, owing to their being based upon a false exegesis. Those who, placing all their confidence in the method of interpreting the Apocalypse by the light of contemporary events, searched the history of the first century for a Parthian invasion, a Roman punitive expedition against a rebellious province, an earthquake, a plague of locusts or a famine, certainly made all sorts of discoveries;

¹ ii. 4.² iii. 1-4. Cf. Jude 23.³ ii. 14 fol. and 24.⁴ ii. 24.

but their labour was unfortunately wasted, because the writer does not record these plagues as having already come to pass, but announces them as belonging to the future. No more is to be deduced from his prophecies than that he himself knew of such calamities, either from his own experience, or else from reading or from popular belief. Rev. xii. 6 has, however, been cited as favouring an assignment to the year 69; the woman who escapes to the desert for three and a half years after the birth of her son is supposed to represent the Christian community of Jerusalem, which withdrew to Pella beyond Jordan at the beginning of the Jewish war. But the writer is here dealing with events in Heaven¹; it is not likely that he would have looked upon the community of Jerusalem as the Mother of Christ, and no calculations can be based upon the number three and a half, which belongs to the Apocalyptic stock-in-trade. Since, in fact, Gunkel made his thorough and, it is to be hoped, lasting exposure of the errors of this exegetic method, it has rather seemed as if we may no longer expect to find any reference in the strictly Apocalyptic parts of the book to the writer's own time or to that which had preceded it. Yet this is not so. Like all Apocalyptic writers, he occasionally finds himself in a position to connect the future with the past, by the statement and justification of a chronological scheme, and if, again, he rejects as impossible an event belonging to the future, we may be certain that he himself had not witnessed its occurrence. This last case is exemplified in chap. xi., the former in chaps. xiii. and xvii. In xi. 1 the seer is bidden to measure the temple of God, but not the outer court, because this had been given to the Gentiles, who should tread the holy city under foot for forty and two months. The 'forty and two months' must be taken with all reserve, but it is nevertheless indisputable that such a sentence must have been written before the destruction of the Temple in August of the year 70, and it is also more than probable that it was written when the worst fears were entertained for the fate of the rest of the city—that is, during the siege.

It is quite clear, again, that the sea-beast of chap. xiii.

¹ xii. 1, 4, 7.

is meant to represent the Roman Empire, and its seven heads upon which were 'names of blasphemy,' seven emperors, who had arrogated to themselves that name which belonged to God alone—Augustus, i.e. *Σεβαστός*,—and also other titles, such as *σωτήρ* (Saviour), which robbed Him of the honour due to none but Himself. Now, since Domitian would, reckoning from Octavius Augustus, be the eleventh emperor—or if we omitted the three short reigns of Galba, Otho and Vitellius (68–69), still the eighth—this passage about the seven heads could not have been written as late as the time of Domitian (81–96), but only at a time when the fall of the world-empire might be hoped for immediately after the reign of a seventh Emperor. One of these heads had, according to xiii. 3, been 'smitten unto death,' but the death-stroke was healed, and the respect of the world for the beast only increased: to whom, then, should this refer but Nero, who died in the summer of 68, but who, according to the popular fancy, still lived on, so that a series of *Nerones redivivi* made their appearance and sought to snatch the imperial power? Now in xiii. 18, the number of the beast—that is to say, probably that of the head which was healed, since it was also the 'number of a man'—is given as six hundred and sixty and six, which, according to the value of the letters in Hebrew, has been interpreted by four German scholars of our own time, working independently, as 'Nero Caesar.' It is true that the calculation is not absolutely free from doubt, for it would be false if the variant of Irenæus, 'six hundred and sixteen,' were the true reading, and altogether would perhaps seem more plausible, considering this reference to *Nero redivivus*, to hold with Mommsen that the Apocalypse belongs to the end of the reign of Vespasian (69–79), since it was then that the first pseudo-Nero made his appearance in the East. But at what date such rumours might have arisen among the people, especially in Asia, we do not know. In chap. xvii. the writer returns once more to the beast, who is now carrying the harlot Babylon (i.e. Rome); and here in vv. 9 fol. he does give us a sort of clue. We are told that the seven heads 'are seven kings' (i.e. Emperors), 'the five are fallen, the one is' (i.e. the sixth), 'the other' (the seventh) 'is not yet come, and when he

cometh, he must continue a little while. And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition.' According to this, then, the author wrote during the reign of the sixth Roman Emperor, i.e. of Galba (68-69), or, more probably, since Galba would not have been heard of much in the East, of Vespasian, whose son and successor, Titus (79-81), would, as the writer thought, have but a brief reign, reckoned apocalyptically, and then live to see the fall of the Roman Empire. But no; verse 11 tells us that an eighth was yet to come, who, in conjunction with all the kings of the earth (ten in number), should 'war against the Lamb,' but should be destroyed; now, since this is at the same time one of the seven, it can only refer to a re-vivified Nero, whose speedy re-appearance was so generally expected. The words 'the sixth king is'¹ absolutely prohibit that assignment of the Apocalypse to the time of Domitian which seemed just now so probable; although verse 11 by itself might have been written under Domitian if the author had meant to represent him as a second Nero. Here, then, we are confronted by the following problem: while the greater part of the Apocalypse affords no data for determining the date of its composition, certain indications in chaps. xi. xii. xiii. and xvii. oblige us to assume that it was written in the period between the death of Nero and the destruction of Jerusalem, while others again, especially in chaps. ii. iii. and vi., seem to point equally distinctly to a time at least twenty-five years later.

8. We cannot hope to master these difficulties as long as we regard the Apocalypse as a perfectly independent work created by a single author. The contradictory indications of date demand the supposition that there exist within the book different elements, which were not brought into connection until a later time. Thus, when *D. Völter*, at the instigation of Prof. Weizsäcker, was the first to attempt, in 1882, a reduction of the Apocalypse into a number of smaller Christian Apocalypses or fragments of such writings, criticism made a great step in advance; and a further step was taken when, in 1886, *E. Vischer* formally recognised the Jewish origin of the groundwork of the Apocalypse, and sought to interpret it as the expanded

¹ xvii. 10.

translation made by a Christian of the next generation, of the Aramaic original of some Jewish writer. Unfortunately, new difficulties here arose, for Völter himself did his best to shake our faith in his theories by his restless love of throwing out ever newer and more artificial plans of the process of development which the Apocalypse was supposed to have undergone. For the last two decades, German,¹ Dutch² and French³ scholars have vied with one another in their efforts to solve all the riddles of the Apocalypse by the combination and emendation of those two fundamental hypotheses; the supposed sources of the Apocalypse become more and more numerous—some are Jewish, some Christian, and some to be traced to copyists and interpolators—but at present the only result of this activity has been that the uninitiated receive the impression that nothing is certain and nothing impossible in the field of New Testament research.

Even apart from the contradictory indications of date, however, we are compelled to recognise the kernel of truth in all these hypotheses by the incongruity existing between certain parts of the Apocalypse and the main scheme, or even between them and their own immediate contexts. All runs smoothly as far as vi. 17, but then, before the seventh seal is opened in viii. 1, chapter vii. is unexpectedly thrust before our eyes, containing a description of the sealing of 144,000 Israelites, and introducing us to an innumerable host of the faithful servants of the Lamb, who stand before the throne singing praises to God. The second half of the chapter (vv. 9–17) is of course the complement to the first half, felt to be necessary from the standpoint of Christian universalism, but it is the first half itself (vv. 1–8) which appears to be an interpolated fragment. The four winds which are held back for a moment only by four angels (vv. 1–3) are afterwards forgotten, nor is there any reference further on to the 144,000 servants of God sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel, for no one could identify them with the *faithful* of 9 fol., because these are removed far beyond the power of the winds. In xiv. 1–5, the 144,000 souls who stand

¹ E.g., F. Spitta and K. Erbes.

² E.g., T. G. Weyland.

³ E.g., A. Sabatier and H. Schoen.

revision and compilation are disposed of, and it is only the seer's *authorities* that we have to investigate. And, since in those parts which are certainly from the author's own pen nothing points to a time before 70 A.D., we shall not regard the Apocalypse as a production of the year 69, into which all kinds of later material have been interpolated, but rather as the work of a *Christian of about the year 95, who in many places inserted older Apocalyptic fragments, more or less adequately harmonised with the context.*

Whether these older fragments belonged to one or more Apocalypses, and whether they are directly or merely indirectly of Jewish origin, will perhaps never be determined with absolute certainty: the latter especially, because in the matter of eschatological beliefs the Christian growth is so closely entwined with the Jewish parent stem—except where faith in Jesus is directly concerned—that the two are indistinguishable. It is true that large tracts of the Apocalypse breathe the Jewish spirit, reflect Jewish hopes, Jewish longings for revenge, and Jewish ideas; but might not a Christian have brought such feelings with him from his own Jewish past? As to the question of the number of sources, and still more that of their reconstruction, it is the part of sober criticism to forego any attempt to answer it in the case of the Apocalypse; the writer has made use of his older material in far too arbitrary a way for that,—sometimes completely remoulding it, sometimes adapting it to his own use by insertions, transpositions or omissions; nor should it be forgotten that he is borrowing from the property of others, even when, without any actual document before him, he is yet making use of earlier Apocalyptic material. The duty of tracing these materials, from the point of view of religious history, far back to their possibly distant sources, has been demonstrated most powerfully by Gunkel, who has at the same time applied sharp and salutary criticism both to certain prevailing methods of literary judgment and to the school of interpretation by means of contemporary history; but apart from his own superstitious belief in the one method *extra quam nulla salus*, he shares with his adversaries the prejudice of regarding the writer of the Apocalypse as a *corpus vile*

which takes the food offered it and must assimilate it well or ill. On the contrary, the Seer is far too independent to warrant us in hunting out a tradition behind everything he says; where, indeed, as in chaps. xiii. and xvii., or xi. and xii., he cannot work out his allegory, or can only do so with the help of artificial or violent expedients, then we may be sure he is resting on tradition, oral or written; but, for the rest, is it not possible that an Apocalyptic writer may have shown some fragments of the gift of invention? And are not certain eccentricities of form and matter—*σκάνδαλα*—imposed upon an Apocalypse by its very *genre*? Those, then, who think themselves justified merely on the ground of some irregularity, some contradiction or repetition, in explaining it by a theory of interpolation, mistake the true character of the book, which in its fantastic imagery, spun out to great elaboration, and yet flowing from no fresh or original inspiration, could not possibly observe either regularity or symmetry of style. To pretend to have found an answer to every question raised by the Apocalypse is the very opposite of science.

BOOK III

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

THE FOUR GOSPELS

[Cf. B. Weiss: 'Die vier Evangelien im berichtigten Text mit kurzer Erläuterung' (1900)—the notes merely intended as an introduction to the revised text of the Gospels; G. Volkmar: 'Marcus und die Synopse der Evangelien' (1876)—extremely original and suggestive, but eccentric and specially prejudicial against Matthew. Further, H. Weisse: 'Die Evangelienfrage in ihrem gegenwärtigen Stadium' (1856); C. Weizsäcker: 'Untersuchungen über die evangelische Geschichte' (1864); E. Renan: 'Les Evangiles et la seconde génération chrétienne' (1877); P. Ewald: 'Das Hauptproblem der Evangelienfrage und der Weg zu seiner Lösung' (1890), a spirited attempt to maintain the Fourth Gospel intact by applying the most vigorous criticism to the Synoptics; and W. Brandt: 'Die evangelische Geschichte und der Ursprung des Christenthums' (1893). The author of this book is a second Strauss in scepticism, and has all the latter's learning, independence and love of truth without his 'mythological' preconceptions, but unfortunately lacks a touch of Renan's genius. Lastly, Adolf Harnack's 'Die Chronologie der althristlichen Literatur,' vol. i. pp. 589-700 ('Die Evangelien'); G. Dalman's 'Die Worte Jesu,' vol. i. (1898); and P. Wernle's 'Althristliche Apologetik im N. T.' published in the 'Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft' for 1900, pp. 42-65—a clever but somewhat one-sided attempt to explain the differences between Mark and the later Gospels as the result of the needs of Christian Apologetics against Jews and Gentiles respectively.]

§ 23. *General Remarks on the Gospels*

1. For about a hundred years the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Luke have been called the *Synoptic* Gospels in contradistinction to the Gospel according to John, because they stand in such close and at the same time such inextricable mutual relations that a synopsis, i.e. a general view of the whole, is often essential even for a proper understanding of the text, and it is impossible to pass judgment on any one of them without first taking the others into consideration. For comparative study of this kind it is hardly possible to do without a *Synopsis* which prints the text of the three Evangelists either in parallel columns or else one above the other, so that the reader can embrace the parallel passages at a glance and find the peculiarities of each single Gospel ready divided by external marks from the matter common to the other two or three.

[The 'Synopsis der drei ersten Evangelien' by A. Huck (1898), forming an appendix to Holtzmann's 'Hand-Commentar,' vol. i. (1898), is most conveniently arranged, while R. Heineke's 'Synopsis der drei ersten kanonischen Evangelien mit Parallelen aus Joh.' is, though on a different system, a work of the most scrupulous care. England, however, possesses a still more brilliant example in the polychrome 'Synopticon' of W. G. Rushbrooke (1880). A. Wright's 'Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek' (1896) displays too one-sided an interest in Mark, and its supplement in the same author's 'The Gospel according to St. Luke in Greek' (upon which a similar edition of Matthew is presumably to follow) was necessary. Unfortunately, the absence in all these Synopses of the variant readings is much felt.]

2. In the old tradition the Synoptics and John all bear the same name, *Gospel* (according to Matthew, Mark etc.—*κατὰ Ματθαῖον*), a name which can hardly date from the writers themselves. In the New Testament, especially in the writings of Paul, the word 'Gospel' has the specific meaning of the glad tidings of the fulfilment of all prophecy in Jesus Christ, and of the kingdom he established. Moreover, when Paul speaks of his '*Gospel*' the word means to him the sum of

all that he, as an Apostle, has to communicate, which indeed consisted in 'Christ alone.' Everyone, however, who gave up his life to the furtherance of this message was an Evangelist. But with Eusebius (about 325 A.D.) 'Evangelist' is the technical name for the writers of the canonical Gospels, of which he speaks in the plural quite fluently, for meanwhile—and indeed considerably earlier, in Marcion's time, about 140 A.D.—'Gospel' had become the term for a certain literary species, i.e. for the books which told of the Life and Passion and Resurrection of the Lord: Origen (*circa* 250) speaks without any difference of meaning of the Gospel and the Gospels. These are the books which Justin terms 'memoirs of the Apostles,' and Eusebius the 'Doings' or 'History' of Jesus (*αἱ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πράξεις*). The transition from the wider to the more limited interpretation of the word was an easy one; and a lingering sense of the original meaning of the word Gospel—a word which demands in reality only one subjective genitive ('God's') and one objective genitive ('of Jesus Christ')—can be traced in the fact that the authors' names were not connected with the title by means of the genitive case (as, for instance, the Epistles of Paul), but through the medium of the preposition *κατά*. This formula has ever since been retained in the Latin Bible, either as *cata* or as *secundum*, although by about 400 A.D. people had come to talk quite naturally of the 'Evangelium sancti Lucae.' It would never have occurred to men in those days to argue whether *κατὰ Λουκᾶν* had from the beginning meant the immediate author, and not merely the authority from whose spoken words the Gospel had been written down by some nameless person, even though *κατά* does in itself admit of different interpretations.

3. The Gospels cannot be called historical books if the term be interpreted as applying solely to books which owe their entire origin either to a mere love of narrative, or to the scientific impulse to recall the past, or to the wish to gain insight into the interdependence of past events and to pass judgment upon them. The same may be said of the Acts. The Gospels were written first and foremost for edification—to supply the need of the community which grounded its faith on the words, deeds and sufferings of Jesus, and which

could not let the recollection of these things—the basis of its existence—be covered up or dimmed. The object of the Gospels was to arouse and keep for ever living the *faith in Jesus Christ*, to be a substitute for, or perhaps an accompaniment to, the personal preaching of the missionary, and they were also of great use to the primitive Christian in apology and controversy. But they pursued their object through the medium of historical materials, and preserved the narrative form of writing; therefore, in spite of their overwhelming religious *tendency*, they still have a claim to the title of historical books, at least as much as the books of the Maccabees, and more than the ‘Life of St. Antony’ of Athanasius. How far they are *trustworthy* historical sources is another question, and one to which we shall revert later on. A religious intention must indeed necessarily influence a writer’s choice of material, but it need not prevent him from telling the truth. Luke certainly claimed to be an historian, and all four Gospels have at least as much right to be included in the literature of history as many a modern ‘Life of Christ.’

A. THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

[Cf. B. Weiss: ‘Das Marcusevangelium und seine synoptischen Parallelen’ (1872) and ‘Das Matthäusevangelium und seine Lucasparallelen’ (1876)—very thorough exegesis and sober criticism. Hand-Commentar, vol. i., ‘Die Synoptiker’ and ‘Die Apostelgeschichte’ (both by Holtzmann himself). Further, Holtzmann’s other work, ‘Die synoptischen Evangelien’ (1863); J. C. Hawkins: ‘Horæ synopticæ’ (1899), and J. Wellhausen’s ‘Skizzen und Vorarbeiten,’ vi. pp. 187 fol. (1899).

It seems advisable to begin our examination of the three Synoptic Gospels with a survey of their contents, the outline of the story of Jesus which they all present in common; then to consider in the case of each Gospel independently what conclusions we may come to (whether on the ground of tradition or on that of the signs and indications they themselves contain) concerning questions of literary history, such as those of author, individuality, date and motive of composition, and to keep the subject of their mutual relations to be dealt with last. Each of them made its appearance independently, and each of them may therefore claim to be considered independently, both as to what it has

transfiguration of their Master on a 'high mountain,'¹ and to the end of chap. xviii. Jesus exerts himself in many different directions to prepare his followers for the time when they would be left alone, and especially to familiarise them with his own conviction of the necessity of his death. In xix. 1 he turns his steps towards Judæa on the last fatal journey—always ready to make use of any opportunity of strengthening and enlightening his disciples—and enters Jerusalem in triumph as Messiah. By the cleansing of the temple he excites the fury of the authorities, and then foretells their downfall in symbolical actions and in the parables of xxi. 28 fol., 33 fol., and xxii. 1 fol. After a victorious argument with the Pharisees (the tribute-money, the great commandment of the law) and the Sadducees (non-existence of marriage in the resurrection), he casts them off in chap. xxiii., with terrible denunciations. Chaps. xxiv. and xxv. contain his last testament to the disciples, in which he first describes the Last Things in apocalyptic colours, and then shows them, through the parables of the ten virgins and the talents and by the picture of the Last Judgment, how to draw the true practical conclusions from this knowledge. After the preparations described in xxvi. 1 fol. (the anointing in Bethany, to prepare me for burial'), Jesus keeps the Passover with his disciples (20–29); now follow (vv. 30–46) the moving scenes on the Mount of Olives and in the Garden of Gethsemane, then (vv. 47–56) his capture, his trial before Caiaphas and the denial by Peter (vv. 52–75). In xxvii. 1–10 we have his death sentence, the repentance of Judas, the confirmation of the sentence by the Roman governor (vv. 11–26), and finally (vv. 27–56) his mockery, crucifixion and death. Vv. xxvii. 57–66 relate the burial of Jesus and the watching by his grave; on the third day² the women find the grave empty, but are told by an angel that Jesus is risen and will appear to his disciples in Galilee. This comes to pass in xxviii. 16–20, where the risen Christ, invested with all power in heaven and earth, sends them forth to teach and baptise all peoples.

In bulk, Mark falls short of Matthew by about three-

¹ xvii. 1–9.

² xxviii. 1–15.

eighths, but this discrepancy is due but little to Mark's concluding section, for in this part¹ there is the least amount of divergence between two chroniclers, both in the sequence of events and in detail. But the differences in the beginning are all the greater. In i. 14 Mark has already reached the point which Matthew only arrives at in iv. 17. Mark has no birth-story like that of Matthew, but only a brief introduction skilfully concentrating our interest upon the main point, and giving a short account of John's preaching of repentance, his baptising and his prophecies concerning the Messiah,² as well as of Jesus's baptism by the Holy Ghost and of his life in the wilderness.³ Then he turns to the public ministry of Jesus, with which he occupies himself from i. 14 to xiii. 37. As far as ix. 50 the scene of the ministry is laid in Galilee and the districts lying to the north or east of it; afterwards, in chaps. x.-xiii., in Judæa, and in Jerusalem itself after his entry into that city.⁴ In this last half the arrangement of the material varies very little from the arrangement in Matthew, except that in Mark we have no parallel whatever to Matt. xxv. and only a partial parallel to the 'Woes' uttered in Matt. xxiii. The eschatological discourse in Mark xiii. is also shorter than that in Matt. xxiv. Matthew lacks only the beautiful story of the widow's mite given in Mark xii. 41-44, as also in Luke xxi. 1-4. On the other hand, the arrangement adopted in the Galilean part of Mark, i. 14-ix. 50, is peculiar and worthy of note, because in it we can perceive an approach to historical development. First, in i. 14-45, the appearance of Jesus causes only a sort of amazed excitement; in ii. 1 his struggle begins, and in iii. 6 Pharisees and Herodians are already plotting his downfall; in iii. 7 fol. we have a living picture—lighted up by the dazzling glory of his miracles, proving him as they did to be the Son of God—of the Galilean Messiah in his intercourse, first, with the 'multitude' (from whom, however, he is obliged to withdraw himself further and further in painful discouragement), next, with the governing classes roused to mortal hostility against him, and lastly, with his own disciples, who

¹ Mark chaps. xiv.-xvi = Matt. chaps. xxvi. xxviii.

² i. 4-8.

³ i. 9-13.

⁴ xi. 1-11.

schrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft,' part i., 1900, entitled 'Zur Entstehung des ersten Evangeliums' (pp. 219-248).]

1. The Gospel of Matthew was used, though anonymously, by most of the Christian writers of the second century. But considering the freedom of quotation of those days, it is hardly possible, nor is it worth while, to make a list of authors who can be proved to have been acquainted with Matthew. As far as we know, the authorship of the Gospel by the Apostle Matthew was never once questioned. It was universally held to be the oldest, and Eusebius for one has details of its origin to give us,¹ to the effect that when Matthew was going on to preach to other peoples after leaving the Jews, he left behind him his Gospel, in the mother tongue, as a substitute for his own personal ministration. Origen (about 240) was already aware that the Gospel had been written for the converted Jews, and Irenæus speaks of its being written in Palestine at the time when Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel in Rome. But the special emphasis laid by all these critics on the words 'written in the Hebrew tongue' betrays the source whence all their knowledge springs, namely Papias.² Papias is quoted by Eusebius in his 'Historia ecclesiastica'³ in the following terms: 'Matthew wrote down the Sayings in the Hebrew tongue, and everyone translated them for himself as best he could.' I consider it to be beyond dispute that Papias was here giving information concerning what is now our First Gospel, and that he regarded it as a Greek version of a Gospel written in Hebrew by the Apostle Matthew. I think it probable, too, that if he owed his information to the 'Presbyter,' the latter understood the same thing by it as he himself, and that when Papias inquired of him as to Matthew's book he and his questioner were not talking at cross purposes. Nevertheless, although the fact seems highly favourable to this view that in Matt. ix. 9-13 the call of the publican Matthew to the ranks of the disciples is told at particular length,⁴ while in the parallels to this passage⁵ the name of the publican is given as Levi, it at once gives rise to the gravest objections.

¹ *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 24, 6.

² Died A.D. 165.

³ iii. 39, 16.

⁴ Cf. 'Matthew the publican' in the list of the Apostles Matt. x. 3.

⁵ Mark ii. 14 fol.; Luke v. 27 fol.

The Gospel according to Matthew as we have it to-day cannot possibly be the translation of a Hebrew original. Not only does its clear and fluent Greek, which is much less tinged with Hebrew than that of Mark, forbid such an assumption, but the writer frequently makes use of such forms as the genitive absolute, subordinate clauses and the antithesis of μέν and δέ, while the uniformity of style and vocabulary displayed by the whole Gospel is such as no ordinary translator could have attained to.¹ Even plays on Greek words, like that of xxiv. 30—κόψονται καὶ ὀψονται—are to be met with. It is true that part of the Old Testament quotations are taken from the Hebrew text (e.g. in xiii. 35^a for 'I will utter things hidden from the beginning of the world' we have ἐρεῦξομαι κεκρυμμένα ἀπὸ καταβολῆς instead of the Septuagint rendering φθέγξομαι προβλήματα ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, while on the other hand 35^b corresponds word for word with the Septuagint²), but part of them are also identical with the Septuagint renderings, particularly in cases where the Masoretic text would be of no use, and where the whole story depends upon the Greek—e.g. xxi. 16, where we read with the Septuagint 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise,' as against the Hebrew version 'Through the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast established might [*or a bulwark*].'³ Finally, we shall show later on that Matthew reproduces older Greek authorities practically without modification, and for anyone possessing sane common sense this should surely settle the question of its original language once and for all.

I certainly do not wish, however, to dispute the writer's knowledge of the Hebrew idiom, although many of the instances brought forward to prove it—such as the word-play on 'master of the house' and 'Beelzebub' in x. 25—should rather be laid to the score of Jesus than to that of the Evangelist, while I am not prepared to think that he was the first and only writer who interpreted the Hebrew name 'Jesus' as that of 'the Saviour.'

¹ E.g., τότε, καὶ ἰδοὺ, in referring to the Kingdom of Heaven, the end of the world, etc.

² Compare also Matt. viii. 17 and Isaiah liii. 4^a.

³ Cf. xi. 10, xiii. 14 fol.

But Old Testament quotations like that of xxvii. 9 do betray the Hebrew student, though not—especially when one thinks of Paul, Mark, John!—the Hebrew writer. Nor does the statement of Irenæus, that the heretical Jewish Christians known as Ebionites and Nazarenes used the Gospel of Matthew alone, of which he believed the Church to possess a Greek version, take us any further, for we may doubt whether Irenæus ever saw this Hebrew Gospel of the Ebionites, and perhaps he merely concluded on the authority of Papias that it must be identical with Matthew. Jerome, who displayed a scientific interest in the Gospel according to the Hebrews (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καθ' Ἑβραίων), of which he found a copy in the library of Cæsarea, expressly states that this was the Hebrew foundation of the Canonical Matthew, and such an identification would not have been displeasing to the Jewish Christians. But the very fact that Jerome claims to have made both a Greek and a Latin translation of the Gospel according to the Hebrews shows that there must have been considerable differences between it and Matthew, otherwise such a task would not have been worth while. And indeed the fragments—unfortunately all too few—that still remain to us of the Gospel to the Hebrews¹ differ so markedly from Matthew, both in form and matter, that we cannot even accept the theory that both works were based upon a common Hebrew foundation, recast in the one case in the interests of the Church universal, and in the other in those of the Judaistic party.

Are we, then, to ignore the Papias tradition altogether? Schleiermacher has gained wide acceptance for an hypothesis of compromise, according to which this statement of Papias did not refer to our First Gospel at all, but to an older document, possibly made use of by its author and consisting merely in a collection of Logia. He contends that the 'Presbyter' was speaking only of Logia, that is of *sayings*, and that this was a title wholly inapplicable to a Gospel containing so much narrative matter as Matthew. It is certainly true that Papias had just defined the contents of Mark as 'that which Jesus

¹ Collected, with a critical commentary, by R. Handmann in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, v. 3, 1888, entitled *Das Hebräer Evangelium*.

spoke or did' (*ἡ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα*), and that this sounds like a conscious differentiation between Mark and the more limited work of Matthew; true, too, that the words *ἡρμήνευσε δ' αὐτά* produce the impression that Papias was speaking of oral translation as occasion or necessity arose, and especially in connection with the reading aloud in the Church services. But Papias is not really so very precise in his definitions, for three lines farther on in his passage about Mark he speaks only of 'sayings of the Lord' (*κυριακοὶ λόγοι*) even in his case, while on a closer examination we are bound to consider the *ἑρμηνεία* in the case of Matthew as written and not oral. The point of the statement would be wholly mistaken if we supposed that any special stress was laid on the object, *τὰ λόγια*, or even on the predicate *συνεγράψατο*; the stress lies, on the contrary, solely on the words *ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ*. By the words *τὰ λόγια* the contents of Matthew's book are at once briefly summarised, *a parte potiori*, and solemnly characterised as oracles, such as form the content of the historical books of the Old Testament. Matthew's authorship is taken for granted, but the problem remained to be solved as to how the world came to possess a Greek work from the hand of the Jewish tax-gatherer. The answer was that he himself had written it in his mother-tongue, but that others—obscure, unknown men—had translated it into Greek. A certain shade of depreciation lies in the word 'everyone' as well as in the 'as best he could'; both expressions are meant to imply the inferiority of the translation. It would, however, be a hasty inference to say that the speaker had really known many different versions; he might at most have concluded something of the sort from the complaints of others as to the great discrepancies apparent in the material of what the Christians circulated as their 'Gospel.' Papias—or his informant—was measuring Matthew as well as Mark against a Norm-Gospel, which can scarcely have been other than John; he could not deceive himself as to the differences between them, nor could he venture simply to dispute the authority of the others, and therefore he makes an indirect attack upon them: certainly, he implies, he has not a word to say against Peter or against Matthew, but, after all, their Gospels did not faithfully express

the Apostles themselves, but only the work, carried out as it was under different conditions, of their interpreters.

With this admission our informant has already deprived the Matthew of the Greek Church of direct Apostolic origin. Here he is quite right, for a work which we shall show to be dependent upon various authorities, some of which were themselves not at first hand, cannot indeed be from the pen of an Apostle, of one of the Twelve: but, as a matter of fact, the book nowhere sets up the smallest claim to Apostolic authorship. It is, of course, possible that the markedly legendary features of the narrative might have been preserved to us by an Apostle as well as by anyone else—perhaps even those of the birth-story—if he had himself received them from others. But the arrangement of the Gospel is so artificial, so lacking in the unimportant traits, the sure pegs on which all kinds of detail depend that are never lost to the memory of an eye-witness (for where Mark and Luke can still give the names of individual persons concerned, such as those of Jairus¹ and of Bartimeus,² Matthew contents himself with a colourless ‘a centurion,’ ‘two blind men’)—lastly, it would be so unnatural that the narrator should have withdrawn himself so completely from the circle of characters moving through the Gospel—no ‘I’ or ‘we!’—that we cannot believe this book to have been the work of a disciple.

Does this result, however, deprive the Papias tradition of all its value? I think not. Hebrew speech and imperfect translation may have been invention with a purpose by the Presbyter, but all the more firmly does the name of Matthew cling to this Gospel; the Presbyter found it already existing there, and did not venture to make any attack upon this older tradition. It is true that this tradition itself may be founded on error, but anyone who was enthusiastic enough to seek an Apostolic label for an anonymous Gospel circulating in the first century—for we must be prepared to go back as far as that—would scarcely have hit upon the name of an Apostle so little known as Matthew without definite cause. He would have been far more likely to ascribe it to Peter in view of the brilliant rôle assigned to him

¹ Mark v. 22; Luke viii. 41.

² Mark x. 46.

in xvi. 18 fol. and xvii. 24-27. All existing facts, including the interest shown by the author in Matthew in ix. 9 and x. 3, are best explained on the supposition that peculiar relations existed between this Gospel and Matthew, that the author actually used a collection of Logia made by Matthew as the foundation for his book, and that since he had not his own personal glory so much at heart as the influence of his Gospel, he recommended this latter to his fellow-believers as a Greek version, made according to his ability, of the old Matthew. If Papias's Presbyter knew, on the one hand, of the existence of a Hebrew collection of Logia with Matthew for author, and, on the other, had learnt to regard our first Greek Gospel as the Gospel of Matthew, the combination mentioned by Eusebius would have been the most natural thing in the world to him, who had probably never read the Hebrew text, and in any case believed that he possessed a higher and more spiritual tradition than either Peter or Matthew. However uncritical it may be, then, to insist, in defiance of all appearances and solely on the testimony of Papias, upon an original Hebrew Matthew, it is no less reasonable and safe to recognise a Hebrew collection of Logia made by Matthew as one of the chief constituents of this Gospel—provided, indeed, that when we come to examine the Synoptic authorities we are led by a quite independent road to admit the existence of Hebrew Logia of Apostolic origin. The danger of ranging the *ἐκαστος*-hermeneutist, with his sometimes inadequate *δυνατόν*, too close to the disciple Matthew cannot exist for us, unless we wish to prove ourselves *σμικρότεροι τὸν νοῦν* than the literary historians, in dealing with Eusebius iii. 39.

2. Since we must derive all our knowledge, except the name by which it was known in the Church, from the Gospel itself, we shall first try to determine the date of its composition, of which the ancient world knew nothing. Here we cannot take the comparatively numerous passages into account in which the Holy City is assumed to be still untouched and the service of the Temple still continuing. These are all sayings of Jesus himself, which the author reproduces faithfully according to his documents. The remarkable *εὐθέως* too of verse xxiv. 29, which appears to place the Last Day in

close proximity to the destruction of Jerusalem, springs in like manner from an older authority and cannot be taken as evidence of the date of Matthew. If the catastrophe of Jerusalem really vibrates more powerfully through this Gospel than through any of the others, this does not prove that its author was writing in the first decade after 70 (as Harnack contends), but at most that it was more important for his purpose than for that of the other Evangelists to lay special stress upon that catastrophe. That Matthew was composed after the year 70 is conclusively proved by verse xxii. 7; for there the touch that accords so ill with the rest of the parable of the wedding-feast—the sending out of his armies by the king, roused to wrath by the neglect of his invitations, to ‘destroy those murderers and burn their city’—could scarcely have been thought of before the burning of Jerusalem. The expressions in two of the parables, ‘my Lord tarries’¹ and ‘but because the bridegroom tarried,’² show that men were already feeling that they must seriously face the question of the long delay of the Parusia, and vv. xxvii. 8 and xxviii. 15—‘until this day’—support the impression that the narrator feels himself separated by wide tracts of time from the events he narrates. If the external evidence forbids us to go further than the beginning of the second century, other considerations make it practically impossible to urge an earlier date; the time about the year 100 is the most probable. The general condition of the Church favours this assumption; she had become, on the one hand, a Church Universal, for we hear that the Risen One has promised her the whole of mankind—‘make disciples of all nations,’ ‘lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world’³ (in order to weigh this utterance truly, we need but compare verse xi. 23); on the other, she sees her very existence threatened by the hatred of the powers of this world.⁴ The writer is especially concerned not to give any provocation to the Roman authorities,⁵ and it is not without design that he draws Pilate and his wife (who is well-disposed towards Jesus) in so favourable a light.⁶ Since the later years of Domitian’s reign,⁷ Christianity had had every

¹ xxiv. 48.² xxv. 5.³ xxviii. 18–20.⁴ x. 17 fol.⁵ xvii. 27.⁶ xxvii. 11–24 and 58.⁷ See pp. 212, 283.

reason to assert its political harmlessness, and if possible to call up political personages of the past to bear witness to the fact.

But the decisive argument, in my opinion, is the religious attitude of Matthew. Though its author is so conservative in his treatment of the tradition, he is already far enough removed from it in spirit; he writes a Catholic Gospel, and his truly Catholic temper gained for his work the first place among the Gospels. A Christian who could summarise the task of the Christian missionaries in the words 'baptise them . . . and teach them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you,'¹ who is already familiar with a baptismal formula expressed in precise Trinitarian terms,² can scarcely belong to the first century. Christianity, indeed, as is finely shown especially in xxv. 31-46, is still, properly, only perfect righteousness, the school of goodness and self-sacrifice, the community which accepts the new law given by Jesus—for the ethical interest prevails throughout over the dogmatic—but such a community needs a firm organisation and a clear code of laws, such as we find in xvi. 18 fol. and xviii. 15-17. In Matthew's eyes the community, the Church, forms the highest disciplinary authority, and is the keeper of all heavenly gifts of grace; here, in fact, we find the primitive Catholicism already complete in its fundamental features. It was the strangest mistake that criticism could commit to place this essentially Catholic Gospel first among all the evangelistic products of the early Church. The partisans of tradition might be forgiven for it, for to them the most precious is always the oldest; but in defence of criticism it can only be urged that even at the present day there are many to whom a slight tinge of Jewish colour counts as a sure sign of pre-Catholic origin, and that Hellenisation is proclaimed far too one-sidedly as the one cardinal point of distinction between primitive Christian and early Catholic theology.

3. Who the author was and to what province he belonged will probably never be known. The only certain thing is that he wrote for Greek readers who knew no Hebrew, for he translates Hebrew words to them. For instance, as early

¹ xxviii. 19 fol.

² In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

on earth, and of denying the right of any co-ordinate authority—such as that of Paul—beside his own, within the Church; but the same writer, alone of all the Evangelists, had inserted in the story of Jesus walking on the sea¹ an episode which exposes Peter's want of faith as clearly as that of chap. xxvi.² exposes his cowardice during Jesus' trial. Are we to suppose that the severe 'Wherefore didst thou doubt?' of xiv. 31 is spoken—through the lips of Jesus—by the Paul of Galatians ii. 11? Assuredly not, for the anecdote is merely meant to show that the faith of a true disciple must be able to compass all the miracles performed by Christ himself. But if the anti-Petrine bias is a delusion here, the Petrine or Jewish-Christian bias is no less so in xvi. 17–19 and, more especially, in xvii. 24–27; in this latter passage Peter merely represents the whole class of free sons of God created by Christ, while the words of the former—whatever meaning may have attached to them in the first instance—cannot have been meant by the Evangelist, who wrote long after Peter's death, as a distinction conferred upon Peter alone: in his eyes Peter stood for the Apostolate, for the Apostolic Church.

In chap. xxvii., moreover, we might almost detect a trace of anti-Jewish feeling in Matthew; the Gentile Pilate is represented as washing his hands in innocence of the deed, while all the people cry out: 'His blood be on us, and on our children!'³ Matthew takes pains, in fact, to represent the High Priest and the ὄχλος as those who were breathing slaughter against Jesus. Finally, against the utterances on the side of the Law we must set others that not only attack Pharisaism and all its piety of word and formula in the sharpest way, but were also never written or spoken by a legally strict Israelite; of these we may mention the summing up of the whole of the Old Testament in the twofold commandment concerning the love of God and the love of one's neighbour,⁴ and the saying 'All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them; for this is the law and the prophets.'⁵ Such contradictions in the same Gospel are nothing exceptional:

¹ xiv. 28–32.² Cf. Mark. xiv.³ Verses 24–26.⁴ xxii. 34–40.⁵ vii. 12.

for instance, the warning against the teaching of the Pharisees in xvi. 12 scarcely agrees with xxiii. 3, 'all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe'—a command which seems to be already revoked in xxiii. 4, particularly in connection with xi. 29 fol. Later writers misunderstood individual sayings of Jesus; and moreover in different circumstances and from different points of view Jesus expressed himself differently about the same matter. In following his authorities, Matthew incorporated sayings of a strongly conservative stamp without difficulty, because to him it seemed obvious that, rightly explained, each of these sayings agreed perfectly with his Christianity. But wherever his own hand shows itself, one sees that his method of thought is as universalistic as it is free from the bondage of the Law. In the parable of the marriage feast¹ he sees the rejection of the unbelieving Israelites and the calling of the Gentiles, and the law on the fulfilment of which everything depends, is not for him the Jewish ritual law, but the moral law, which the teaching of Jesus first led men to understand in all its fulness.

Nor is the righteousness which he prizes so highly that of which the Pharisee boasts in the parable,² but rather that which was to be won by obedience to the commandments of Christ, and the Sermon on the Mount is intended to impart the principal substance of this Christian code. The Evangelist looks upon v. 17–19 merely as confirming the agreement between the old revelation and the new; he represents Jesus not as the depreciator of duty and service, but as the teacher who first showed men how to understand the Law and the Prophets in all their profundity and gigantic scope. The ceremonial ordinances do not enter into his thoughts: they have already disappeared from his horizon; and thus the sayings of v. 17 etc. present no difficulties to him.

Of course the Saviour was not the destroyer but the fulfiller of the Old Testament, both in his works and in his teaching (but, of the Law *and the Prophets*, be it observed); it is to prove this that the First Evangelist writes his Gospel; nevertheless, for the believer there can be no other authority

¹ xxii. 1–14.² Luke xviii. 9 fol.

arguments of such quotations, such as xxvi. 15, the stories of the ass and the colt¹ and of Judas,² and also v. 18 fol. because this latter represents the fundamental principle of illustrative quotation; Matthew's three Petrine legends,³ and, in the story of the Passion, xxvii. 19, 24 fol., 52 fol., the passage from xxvii. 62 to xxviii. 20. and a few isolated expressions recalling passages in the Old Testament. Soltau defends this hypothesis on the grounds that the contrast in language between the additions and the rest of the Gospel, and also in style between the discourses and the more considerable additions, demand a difference of author; that the interpolations generally disturb and interrupt the context, whereas as a rule Matthew impresses us with its uniformity of structure, and finally that the original Matthew was anti-Judaistic and undogmatic in his opinions, while on the other hand the Judaistic supplementer maintained a strictly dogmatic point of view. These observations all contain an element of truth, and only the second is somewhat wrongly stated; these 'additions' are *δευτερώσεις*, later accretions, which it was beyond the skill of the Evangelist to weld into a perfect whole with the original substance of the Gospel matter; but must we therefore assume that they were interpolated as afterthoughts into the finished Gospel? This hypothesis would moreover leave but a sorry patchwork task to the Proto-Matthew, and ascribes everything with any independent stamp upon it to his later amplifier. In reality we are never forced by our First Gospel to assume the existence of two different editors—apart, of course, from those portions in which the writer's authorities are distinctly traceable;—it presents a whole, proceeding from a single mind, as far at least as a truly Catholic Christian of the year 100 or thereabouts could create a whole out of such materials. The theory of the Deutero-Matthew was, in fact, only brought forward to make the criticism of the Synoptics easier, for certain writers wished to assert both the dependence of Luke on Matthew and his priority before Matthew. If this is established, we must look upon Matthew as a hybrid production; but on this point we would refer our readers to §§ 28 and

¹ xxi. 2-5.² xxvii. 3-10.³ Chaps. xiv, xvi, and xvii.

29. The hybridity of Matthew, which is in a sense shared by Luke, is to be explained by the facts of religious and traditional developments, not by hypotheses of literary history alone. Under the circumstances, therefore, the mere fact that we find older and newer material intermingled in his book does not justify us in dividing the First Evangelist (the beginning and end of whose work correspond so well together) into two persons, of one of whom we could form no conception. Proto-Matthew, moreover, must have expunged large sections of Proto-Matthew's work, especially his ending: why not, then, have corrected it?

§ 26. *The Gospel according to Mark*

[Cf. works mentioned in §§ 23 and 24. Besides these, H. A. W. Meyer, i. 2, 1892, by B. and J. Weiss; 'International Critical Commentary' (1896), by E. Gould, and P. Schanz's work mentioned in § 25. A. Klostermann's 'Das Marcusevangelium nach seinem Quellenwerthe für die evangelische Geschichte' (1867) is a defence in the apologetic interest, in parts full of caprice, of the priority of Matthew to Mark, but in wealth of material and in sterling quality it has not been equalled by any later work, and certainly not surpassed by that of W. Hadorn, 'Die Entstehung des Marcusevangelium' (1898). For par. 5 (end) see Conybeare's article in the 'Expositor' for 1893, entitled 'Aristion, the author of the last 12 verses of Mark' (p. 241); P. Rohrbach's 'Der Schluss des Marcusevangelium, der Vierevangelienkanon und der kleinasiatische Presbyter,' (1894); Adolf Harnack in 'Texte und Untersuchungen' (1894), xii. 1 b, p. 6, and also his 'Chronologie,' vol i. pp. 696 fol.]

1. As regards the early evidences for Mark, the state of the case is precisely as with those for Matthew. They go back to Papias,¹ who had heard from the 'Presbyter' that Mark had been Peter's interpreter, and had noted down the sayings and doings of Jesus accurately, as far as his memory served him, but not in the right order.² The want of order he excuses by saying that Mark himself was never a hearer or follower of the Lord, but derived all his knowledge from the discourses of Peter, which in their turn were always adapted to the needs of the moment, so that they could not be called

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* iii. 39, 15; see § 25, 1.

² οὐ μέντοι τάξει.

a compilation of the words of the Lord. Mark, therefore, was not at all in a position to arrange them in the right order and to produce a complete Gospel; he rightly attached the greatest importance to omitting nothing and falsifying nothing in what he had heard. How far Papias, who measures Mark by the standard of another Gospel (probably that of John¹) and who thinks himself obliged to excuse his deficiencies, is here mingling his own reflections with the naturally shorter account given by the Presbyter, is no business of ours to decide; the statement concerning the authorship of Mark is certainly the oldest kernel of the story, and we who recognised a sound kernel in the parallel statement concerning Matthew, certainly have no cause to reject it here without a hearing. The First Epistle of Peter also assumes the presence of a Mark in the following of Peter.² Col. iv. 10, where 'Mark, the cousin of Barnabas,' is mentioned as the companion of Paul,³ makes us think of 'John Mark' in the Acts,⁴ whose relations with Paul were not always of the best, and whom nothing could deter from joining Peter later on. The knowledge of Greek and Hebrew which would qualify him for the title of interpreter may without hesitation be attributed to a relation of Barnabas, and the writer of the Gospel possesses this knowledge: he preserves Aramaic words, but translates them correctly into Greek, as, for instance, '*talitha cumi*, which is, being interpreted, Maiden, I say unto thee, arise.'⁵

It is true that we shall have to give a different answer from that given by Papias or the Presbyter, to the question whether Mark arranged his material in the chance order into which Peter threw the words and deeds of Jesus in his teaching. Papias's account of Mark's procedure is, in my opinion, psychologically untenable. In reality Mark has the best *τάξις* of all the Evangelists, for, broadly speaking, the life of Jesus did unfold itself in the way in which Mark describes it. At first the object of universal wonder, he soon provoked opposition, and by dint of his successful efforts towards the moral elevation of the people and their liberation

¹ See p. 305. ² 1. Peter v. 13. ³ Cf. Philem. 24; 2. Tim. iv. 11.

⁴ Acts xii. 12, 25, xv. 37-39.

⁵ Mark v. 41.

from the yoke of the Pharisees and the tutelage of the Scribes, he drew down upon himself that mortal enmity of the upper classes which drove him gradually to withdrawal, to flight, and the limitation of his work to a small circle of disciples, until at last the opportunity came for his complete destruction. But Papias's mistake is one of judgment only, and does not in the least affect the fact attested by him: *that John Mark wrote a Gospel founded on reminiscences of the Petrine circle.* The writer of our Mark never pretends to have been an eye-witness. The anecdote told by him alone,¹ of the mysterious young man who followed Jesus after his capture, when the disciples had already fled, and then when hands were laid on him, left his fine linen cloth, and fled naked, can be taken, as many wish, to refer to the narrator, without the Mark-hypothesis being in the least endangered thereby; for this young man, who only appears once, is not represented as being an actual 'hearer' of the Lord, which Mark himself certainly was not. The probability is that we have in this story a piece of the very oldest tradition, just as we have in the saying² that Simon of Cyrene, who carried the cross, 'was the father of Alexander and Rufus.' The persons in question were still known to Mark, but the other Evangelists pass them over in silence, because they know nothing of them and no religious interest attaches to such statements.

There is no doubt that Peter is especially prominent in this Gospel. The public ministry of Jesus begins with the calling of Peter³; and the healing of his wife's mother⁴ is surely mentioned only because of his own grateful remembrance of the incident. Exactly at the right point in the narrative Mark brings about the distinction between the two names Simon and Peter⁵; later on⁶ a saying is put into the mouth of Peter (Matthew attributes it to 'the disciples'⁷) which could perfectly well have been said by any other follower. Still more striking is the way in which *Peter* is expressly named beside 'his disciples' in xvi. 7 as the recipient of the command to go before into Galilee, where the risen Lord would show himself.

¹ xiv. 51 fol.² xv. 21.³ i. 16-18.⁴ i. 30 fol.⁵ Mark iii. 16.⁶ x. 28, xi. 21.⁷ Matt. xxi. 20.

Nevertheless, the Gospel of Mark cannot be called Petrine in the sense of having been compiled at Peter's dictation, or as forming a valuable authority not only for Peter's recollections of the life and sufferings of Jesus, but also for the Petrine theology, and even for the personality, temperament and disposition of the Apostle. It is perhaps possible that Peter might not have withheld from the knowledge of his brethren stories so deeply discreditable to himself as that of his denial¹ or that of viii. 32 fol., where Jesus rebukes him as 'Satan'; it is perhaps possible that many a mythical feature may have found its way into his picture of Jesus, especially in his story of the last days, that he was capable of taking pleasure in miraculous tales like that of the destruction of the two thousand swine,² and that a half-visionary experience like that of the Transfiguration scene³ may not have been improbable in his case; but could he have related anything so purely legendary as xv. 36, or as the two stories of the feeding of the multitude? If Papias had not suggested the idea, in fact, we should scarcely have thought of claiming Peter as the authority for the statements made in Mark's narrative; Mark's intention was to give us *the* Gospel, not the Gospel according to Peter. He shows himself, besides, to be so skilful a narrator and so fully master of his materials that we should be doing him an injustice in placing him arbitrarily in dependence on Peter, as the ancients wished to do, out of ecclesiastical considerations. Nowhere does the Gospel suggest the idea that its author was fettered by his material; all he tells seems to come straight from his heart, the Gospel he offers is complete in itself:—would this have been so successfully accomplished if he had confined himself to what he had casually learnt from Peter? Moreover, if we believe that Mark was using a written document in chap. xiii., we must by so doing abandon the Petrine foundation.

No, Mark too, like Luke, was a collector; his work did not grow up under the shadow of one mighty name alone. A man who, though a friend of Peter, had had opportunities, for many decades, of hearing other reports from other men concerning the great age of salvation, must have

¹ xiv. 30, 66-72.² Chap. v.³ ix. 2 etc.

written a Gospel different indeed from one which Peter himself or his simple interpreter might have produced.

2. All that this Gospel reveals concerning the theological position of its author agrees with the result just obtained. Different critics have imputed the most opposite tendencies to him: some declare that his Gospel is directly Pauline; others, that it breathes the purest Apostolic tradition; others, again, that it is the Gospel of conscious neutrality, intended to effect a general reconciliation, by the avoidance of extreme utterances on either side, of all parties on a common Evangelistic ground. All this, however, is theory forced upon it from outside. In the writer himself we can trace no tendency but that of telling the Gospel of Jesus Christ as movingly as possible, and of demonstrating his glory through his own words and deeds—the tendency, in fact, which every Gospel must display. The author did not wish to gain favour with any particular creed, school or party. His leanings towards Pauline views, which Volkmar discovered in him in so many places,¹ are of just as problematic a nature as the contrast in which Mark is supposed to stand to the anti-Pauline Apocalypse of John.² Phrases that sometimes have a Pauline ring, like ‘Abba, Father,’³ or the saying about the fulfilling of the time,⁴ need not—if we must insist at all upon direct authority for such trifles—lead us to doubt the authorship of Mark, for Mark certainly came under the influence of Paul. But the material which the writer wishes to reproduce—and to reproduce faithfully and without any subjective additions—had its origin in the Primitive Community, and Mark would certainly not have been the man to Paulinise it, or to have consciously coloured it in any way. From the Gospel itself we derive but one impression concerning the author: that he was a born Jew, familiar with the circle of the original Apostles, and especially interested in Peter, but also a much-travelled person, rejoicing in the fact that the Gospel was to be preached to all the nations.⁵

The confession which he puts into the mouth of the Gentile

¹ Cp. Mark xiii. 35 with Rom. xiii. 12.

² Mark xiii. 26 fol.

³ Only to be found in Mark xiv. 36; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6.

⁴ Mark i. 15; cf. Gal. iv. 4.

⁵ Mark xiii. 10.

centurion beside the Cross, 'Truly this man was the Son of God,' is characteristic of his attitude towards the Gentile mission. Judaistic leanings, Law-bound anxieties, are both outside his horizon; in his eyes the religion of the crucified and risen Son of God was a new world-religion.

We shall never know whether Mark originally wrote for a limited circle of readers or not. He certainly did not write for Palestinian readers, for there would have been no need to translate *Golgotha* and other words of the kind for their benefit, and it would have been superfluous to explain to Jewish Christians in general the time-indication 'the first day of unleavened bread' by the addition 'when they slew the passover.'¹ These little parentheses, however, cannot be explained away as the additions of a translator, for the suggestion that there is an original Hebrew or Aramaic document at the bottom of our Greek Gospel is conspicuously ill-judged. No translator could have created the originality of language shown by Mark. The tradition, according to one branch of which Mark was written in Alexandria, while another and considerably older branch assigns it to Rome, is here of little use to us: the first is the outcome of the legend that Mark was Bishop of Alexandria; the second springs from the remembrance of Peter's activity in Rome, and the assumption that the interpreter must have worked in the same place as his master was then an exceedingly natural one. According to Philemon and Colossians, Mark really went to Rome, and it is very possible that he stayed there a considerable time, and perhaps even that he received the impulse to begin his work there, and stayed to complete it. The influence of the Latin language upon the Greek of Mark's Gospel has been urged in support of this hypothesis, which, however, still remains a mere hypothesis. Some Latin words he takes over bodily (like *ἀργεῖον*, *κῆρυκος*, *κεντυρίων*), and the widow's two mites² he reckons in Roman coinage—'which make a quadrans.' But we must not lay too much stress on isolated instances like these, for with the expansion of the Roman Empire, Latin terms, especially those connected with the law, the army and the taxes, would be sure to make themselves used througho—u

¹ Mark xiv. 12.² xii. 42.

the world. It is therefore more than bold to point to x. 12—which is peculiar to Mark—as a proof of the Roman origin of the Gospel. The words ‘And if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery,’ are certainly surprising from the lips of Jesus, for the divorce of a husband by the wife was unknown to the Jew. But are we to suppose that Mark, the Jew, was here seeking to accommodate the words of Jesus to the Roman marriage-law? If so he must either have become accustomed to the ideas of Roman Law with marvellous rapidity, or else have developed an incredible degree of subtlety. A much simpler explanation is that he made this addition—the wording of which is in any case incorrect—to the genuine Logion of verse 11 out of a love of parallelism and of symmetry; it seemed important to him to declare that in the Kingdom of God the duties and transgressions of men and women counted alike.

3. As to the date at which the Second Gospel was composed, the development of the tradition is interesting. According to Irenæus’s interpretation of him,¹ Papias (about 150 A.D.) seems to imply that during the composition of his book Mark was no longer able to appeal to Peter for emendations or advice; Clement of Alexandria, on the other hand, tells us² that when Peter heard of Mark’s scheme, he neither hindered nor encouraged him, while Eusebius himself maintains³ (about 325 A.D.), on the authority of Clement of Alexandria and Papias, that by revelation of the Holy Spirit Peter had expressed himself well pleased that Mark had been moved to write a Gospel, and had verified (or corroborated) the work (*κυρώσαι τὴν γραφὴν*). Post-Eusebian theologians simply make Peter commission Mark to do the work, taking the former as the actual author, Mark merely as the scribe. In this gradation the ideal of Apostolicity is realised. Of course, the older theory is the more sensible, for the true Apostles never had anything to do with the revision of books. That consideration would not, however, prevent Mark’s Gospel from having been written during Peter’s lifetime, for Mark certainly did not hold a life appointment as Peter’s secretary. On the other hand, it is merely fanciful to

¹ *iii.* 1-7.² Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* vi. 14, 7.³ *Ibid.* ii. 15, 2.

into closer accord with the texts of Matthew or Luke, but to hypotheses of an 'original Mark,' which according to some is shorter than the form we now have, according to others longer. Indeed, some have actually gone so far as to distinguish first, second and third Mark. The least hazardous of these theories is that of the existence of later interpolations such as vv. i. 2, 3; the line between them and the above mentioned 'emendations' is indeed not easy to draw. But even here it is well to proceed with caution; Mark i. 5-8, for instance, can no longer be taken as an interpolation derived from Matthew, as soon as the reader follows Codex D¹ in reading, as against all other versions, 'clothed in a garment of camel's skin' (δέρριν καμήλου) instead of 'clothed with camel's hair with a leathern girdle about his loins.'² The hypotheses of an original Mark arise, however, only from the wish for a simpler solution of the Synoptic problem. They can never have been based on the study of Mark alone, for such a study nowhere produces the impression that any large portion has dropped out, or that any has been inserted in by a strange hand. If we read Matthew and Luke beside him, we may naturally wonder why the story of the centurion at Capernaum does not exist in Mark, still more why he has not a word of Matthew's great Sermon on the Mount. Is it possible that even the 'Lord's Prayer' should not have been known to him, or that he should not have thought it worth inserting? All the same, we must not foist these interpolations upon the 'original Mark,' putting them in, say, after iii. 12, but remind ourselves that it was never Mark's intention to write a *complete* Gospel. Besides giving us in the first place sayings of Jesus which represent actual events, then the discussions with Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees, and prophetic utterances³ which were necessary in order to prove his hero at every turn master of the situation, he contents himself with setting forth in but few examples⁴ the actual manner in which Jesus spoke or taught. Even though he is not essentially concerned with the substance of Jesus' teaching as such, but wishes to demonstrate that

¹ See below §§ 32 *par.* 6, 52 *par.* 2.

² viii. 31 fol., ix. 30 fol., x. 32 fol., and ch. xiii.

³ See Matt. iii. 1-12.

⁴ iv. 1-34.

division created among his countrymen by his activity, and the slow progress made by his cause, had all been foretold and explained in advance by Jesus himself: that, in fact, he had not only foreseen all that had come to pass, but had not even desired anything else. However early or late the Gospel may have been written—even as an abstract of Matthew and Luke after 140 A.D.—it is inconceivable that the writer should have been unacquainted with the many sayings of the Lord which are not to be found in his Gospel, or that he should merely have put them indifferently aside, while it is equally inconceivable that these sayings can have been struck out by a later hand. And to impute to mere chance the disappearance—the almost exclusive disappearance—of the discourses of Jesus would be the most venturesome supposition of all.

But Mark certainly did not write with a constant, though tacit, reference to a collection of Logia from which the reader might fill in what he himself left unsaid; his work does not bear the character of a supplement; his object rather was to provide a Gospel as aid to the work of propaganda, at a time when men were beginning to recognise that they must no longer confine themselves to the direct action of person upon person if the command of Jesus in xiii. 10 was to be fulfilled in time, but must invoke the power of the pen—or of the press, as we should say to-day—in the service of the Gospel. In fascinating the minds of unknown readers with the sublime picture of the Saviour of the world, they would naturally emphasise those features which brought out what was kingly, irresistible, divine about him, though of course their choice would be subject to the influence of Jewish taste; on the other hand, they would reserve for fellow-believers the rules of conduct he had laid down, his teaching concerning prayer, trust in God, the forgiveness of sins, etc. *We* should probably proceed in just the opposite way among our own fellows; we attribute a mightier persuasive power to the Lord's Prayer, to the parables of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Pharisee and the Publican, or to the Sermon on the Mount, than to any of the miracle-stories; but Mark wrote his Gospel for his own contemporaries, basing it upon

of consideration in many respects, but not for critical questions; A. Harnack's 'Chronologie der althristlichen Literatur,' vol. i. pp. 246-50 ('Die Zeit der Apostelgeschichte und der drei Evangelien'), and his article entitled 'Das Magnificat der Elisabeth, nebst einigen Bemerkungen zu Lc. i. u. ii.' in the 'Sitzungsberichte der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaft' for 1900, pp. 538-556.]

1. There is no tradition worthy of the name concerning Luke, whom Papias did not know, or at any rate did not mention. The ancients were universally agreed that the writer was that Luke, disciple of Paul, who is mentioned in Philem 24, 2. Tim. iv. 11, and called 'the physician' in Col. iv. 14: presumably a native of Antioch. Eusebius naturally lays stress on the fact that he was on intimate terms with the other Apostles; Irenæus was of opinion that the Gospel had only been written after the death of Paul, but later writers take care to fasten the responsibility, as in the case of Mark, on the Apostle himself. Happily for us, the author has supplied a prologue to his Gospel in which, it is true, he says nothing of himself, but explains his motives for writing. From this we learn (1) that he is not attempting anything unheard of, for *many*—of whom, according to the natural interpretation of the words, none were eye-witnesses—had attempted to compile an account of what was Christian history *κατ' ἐξοχήν*; (2) that he does not belong to the original eye-witnesses, does not even claim to have had close relations with them or with any one of them, for he only wishes to write 'even as they delivered them unto us' (that is, to us Christians of a later day: of himself he writes directly afterwards in the singular, *ἔδοξε καὶ μοί*); (3) that the older Gospels do not satisfy him, because they have not traced 'the course of all things accurately from the first,' and because their 'order,' i.e. the chronological arrangement of the individual parts, is faulty; (4) that he bases his confidence of being able to produce something better than his predecessors, not on any gift of inspiration that had been imparted to him, but on his own exhaustive and methodical labours. The prologue might indeed have been prefixed to any work of profane history just as aptly as to this, and it is not religious hesitation at the boldness of

venturing to write down the sacred story that underlies verse 3, but a feeling of the difficulty for him, who was no eye-witness, of carrying out the task he had undertaken.

The question as to whether the celebrated companion of Paul was the author of this Gospel cannot be decided without reference to the Acts. We shall therefore leave it to be discussed in § 32, pars. 3 and 5, and shall here content ourselves with obtaining some idea of the peculiarities of the Gospel.

2. According to verses 3 and 4 of the prologue, the author wrote his Gospel for a person who was either a Christian catechumen or who at any rate displayed an interest in Christianity: 'that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.' This man, Theophilus, evidently a person of some distinction (here he is greeted as *κράτιστε Θεόφιλε*, in the Acts merely as *ὁ Θεόφιλε*, a fact from which the omniscient critics have concluded that in the interval between the writing of the Gospel and the Acts Theophilus became more intimate with Luke and was probably baptised by him), is certainly not the only reader whom Luke expected to have, still less a fictitious personage in whom every 'friend of God' was to recognise himself, but it was to him that the writer, according to the custom of those days, dedicated his book when he committed it to the public. The purpose which it was intended to serve, however, may nevertheless be gathered from verse 4: Luke's object is to increase the convincing power of the Gospel through the improvements which he could offer in the presentation of the Gospel-stories. But there is nothing to indicate that he claimed to write the Gospel in a new spirit and according to a better interpretation; his predecessors themselves, according to verse 1, had not written of anything but 'those things which are most surely believed among us,' and this alone inclines us to look askance on the theory that he had a special purpose in writing, whether of an ultra-Pauline or a conciliatory character. In fact, the indications of purpose (*tendenz*) discovered by the critics mutually destroy one another. It is true that the paragraph in Matthew so strangely favourable to the Law¹ does not appear here, but in reality Luke says the same thing

¹ v. 17 fol.

uncleanness, for instance, which is reported by both the other Synoptists.¹ These questions had as little actual interest for him as for his readers, for whose benefit he explains the word 'scribes' (γραμματεῖς) six times by the addition of νομικοί, turning it into 'lawyers,'² and once translates it into νομαδιδάσκαλοι, 'doctors of the law.' If Luke carries the genealogy of Jesus³ back to Adam instead of only as far as Abraham,⁴ he intended thereby neither to protest against the sonship of the Lord to Abraham or David (which he seems rather to acknowledge in verses 31 and 34) nor to excite any profound meditations concerning Jesus as the second Adam, the new creation; he merely shows by so doing—assuming, indeed, that we owe the list to him at all—his love of scholarly completeness, coupled indeed with the secondary desire to emphasise the *man* in Jesus more clearly than the *Jew*. His determination to relate 'all things from the first' is responsible for his birth- and childhood-stories, which go back as far as the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist, describe in great detail the miraculous surroundings in which the birth of the Saviour was accomplished, and do not even lose sight of Jesus when he had grown to boyhood; to this also we owe his conclusion, which gives a remarkably full account of the intercourse of the risen Christ with his faithful followers, and ends with a brief report of his Ascension. The other promise made by Luke in the prologue, that he would give the chronological data more accurately and state the relationship between individual scenes with greater clearness, is also fulfilled by the dates he furnishes in the opening chapters,⁵ especially, however, by iii. 1 and 2, where the year of the beginning of the Baptist's activity is established by a sixfold synchronism. Later on, too, he often makes the most loyal efforts to fix in some degree the time at which a particular event takes place, as at ix. 37, 'on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain,' or at xiii. 1. The 'Great Interpolation'⁶ is also made with a view to a better chronology of the life of Jesus, and

¹ Mark vii. Matt. xv.² This only occurs once in Matthew, xxii. 35.³ v. 17; also Acts v. 34.⁴ iii. 23-38.⁵ Matt. i. 1-17.⁶ i. 5. ii. 1 fol., ii. 42, iii. 23.⁷ ix. 51 fol.

the remarks, characteristic of Luke, concerning the occasion (or the *tendency*) of any saying of Jesus¹ are likewise prompted by his efforts after the greatest possible precision.

All this, however, has nothing to do with the writer's religious attitude. Only in one point is this perceptibly different from that of the other Evangelists; even without any comparison, we are struck by the unworldliness of his tone, by his aversion to property and enjoyment, by his glorification of poverty, his accentuation of the duty of self-sacrifice and especially of almsgiving. One need merely read Luke xiv. 26 and 33 beside Matt. x. 37 in order to feel the sternness of Luke's demands; one almost has the impression that the boundless charity towards sinners shown by this Gospel was to be compensated for by the equally exalted character of the demands made on the disciples. Other-world ethics finds its place by the side of other-world religion, and is fully conscious of its own rights; to be blessed, loving and loved in the next world meant that in this the Christian must be wretched, hating and hated. 'Blessed are the poor,' 'Woe unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation'²—this is Luke's version, and the commandments of xiv. 12 and xviii. 22 ('sell all that thou hast') and the incidents of xiv. 21 and xix. 8 are all in the same tone. The most striking instance, however, is the parable of Dives and Lazarus,³ according to which poverty and need *per se* will open the way to Heaven, while riches and prosperity appear certain to be rewarded by eternal torment. Mammon, or the possession of great wealth, is simply *unrighteousness*,⁴ but the possessor still has the power of winning eternal life by distributing his goods—'Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when it shall fail [or, when your end approaches], they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.' This is a metaphorical expression and cannot be pressed, but Luke certainly takes the idea very seriously, that the future glory was to act as compensation to those who had suffered and gone hungry while on earth.

Thus it has been suggested that this Gospel bears an

¹ E.g., xviii. 1 and 9, xix. 11. ² Because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and they supposed that the Kingdom of God was immediately to appear.

³ vi. 20 and 24.

⁴ xvi. 19-31.

⁵ xvi. 9 and 11.

instances, however, the Semitic dress is due to the presence of Aramaic authorities which Luke reproduces with tolerable accuracy, and in reality we miss a conscious and measured art more in Luke's Gospel than in the others—wherever, at least, it is possible to trace his method of procedure at all; so that in certain portions it bears the appearance of a compilation more markedly than either Mark or Matthew. Thus, since none have ever regarded Luke as a mere translation from the Aramaic, the most probable assumption seems to be that the plentiful traces of Aramaic idiom to be found in it are due either to the documents employed by the writer, or to the unconscious influence exerted upon his own style (even in places where he was writing independently) by the authorities he was accustomed to consult. His great reputation as a writer rests upon higher merits than this; he has a wonderful power of maintaining a full harmony of tone throughout the whole length of his narratives, as of his discourses; he knows how to attain the desired effect, and the stories of Mary Magdalene¹ and of Martha and Mary,² the parables of the Good Samaritan³ and of the Prodigal Son⁴—all of them peculiar to Luke—will always hold their place among the noblest gems of the narrative art.

§ 28. *The Synoptic Problem*

1. In most cases the existence of several accounts of the same period of history is a pure gain, and raises no difficulties: it is almost always easy, for instance, to reconcile two or three different biographies of a saint and to extract the true story from them. If we possessed, say, only Matthew, John and one or two apocryphal Gospels as the sources of the Gospel story, the corresponding questions might probably be settled in very few words. The Synoptic problem consists in the unique commingling of agreement and disagreement—both in every conceivable degree—which a comparison between Matthew, Mark and Luke brings to light, and which at first sight makes it seem a hopeless undertaking to attempt to describe the origin of the three Gospels in such a way as to

¹ vii. 36-50.

² x. 38-42.

³ x. 30-37.

⁴ xv. 11-32.

avoid doing any violence to the facts, while yet unravelling the tangle of peculiarities and agreements which those three sources present.

How far-reaching is the unanimity between the Synoptic Gospels is felt as soon as we place John beside them. Their whole outline of the life of Jesus is the same; before his first appearance in public come the baptism in the Jordan and the sojourn in the wilderness, and then follows a period of great activity in Galilee, with Capernaum as the base of operations; the journey to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover (which is moreover the *first* he makes as Prophet, so that we are obliged to limit the period of his Messianic activity to a year at most) ushers in the days of his Passion, which end with his seizure, crucifixion and resurrection on the third day. The last three chapters run side by side in all three Gospels, and even from the entry into Jerusalem¹ the sequence of the important events and sayings is the same, while as in the case of the Baptism, Temptation and return of Jesus to Galilee, so the preceding account of the Baptist and his preaching is given by all the Synoptists in the same place and in the same manner. The three narratives consisting, first, of the healing of the man sick of the palsy, next of the calling of the publican, and lastly of the discourse concerning fasting, which are entirely unconnected internally, are given in the same order by all the Synoptists,² and the same may be said of the stories of the calming of the storm and of the Gerasene demoniac.³ Reckoned by the natural boundaries of the paragraphs, and apart from the story of the Passion, 50 to 70 sections common to all three Synoptics have been enumerated, and this is about half the total number which it is possible to distinguish. Nor is this unanimity ever confined merely to the sense—although there it extends to the very finest gradations—but in form and expression it reaches so far that whole sentences in Matthew, Mark and Luke are almost word for word the

¹ Mark xi. 1 fol.

² Mark ii. 1-22; Matt. ix. 1-17; Luke v. 17-39.

³ Mark iv. 35-v. 20; Matt. viii. 23-34 Luke viii. 22-39.

same.¹ And the same degree of unanimity is to be observed between any two of the Synoptics in those passages which are absent in the third, of which 30 to 50 have been distinguished as common to Matthew and Luke without Mark, 10 to 15 to Mark and Matthew without Luke, and perhaps 5 to Mark and Luke without Matthew—always apart from the last three chapters in each. In the first case, for instance, the preaching of John² is rendered in exactly the same words by Matthew and Luke, the story of the centurion at Capernaum³ almost as literally, and the message of Jesus to John in captivity,⁴ practically without variation; in the second, the answer to the question of the sons of Zebedee,⁵ and the account of the healing power of Jesus' garment,⁶ are identical in Matthew and Mark, while in the third, Luke and Mark agree in the story of Jesus and the demoniac in the synagogue of Capernaum,⁷ and in that of the widow's mite.⁸

This similarity, however, is in no case to be explained by the assumption that the accounts we have before us are absolutely accurate and authentic narratives. Two or three eye-witnesses would never agree so closely in their account of the same event as those that we have here. Nor must we forget that they give us only a very small selection of the great mass of Jesus' deeds and sayings. If, then, this selection was made with such striking coincidence by all three—the same order being maintained even with events and sayings whose precise date was by no means determinable—such coincidence cannot have been the work of chance. But the most marvellous thing of all would be the similarity of expression which meets us just as much in the reports of Jesus' sayings as in the narration of his miracles; those sayings must, after all, have been translated from Aramaic into Greek, and then we are to suppose that two or three independent translators

¹ E.g., Mark i. 7 fol., Matt. iii. 11 and Luke iii. 16; Mark ii. 10, Matt. ix. 6 and Luke v. 24; Mark ii. 22, Matt. ix. 17, Luke v. 37 fol.; Mark viii. 35, Matt. xvi. 25, Luke ix. 24; Mark xiv. 48, Matt. xxvi. 55, Luke xxii. 52^b.

² Matt. iii. 7^b-10 and 12, Luke iii. 7^b-9 and 17.

³ Matt. viii. 9, Luke vii. 8.

⁴ Matt. xi. 4-6, Luke vii. 22 fol.

⁵ Mark x. 37-40, Matt. xx. 21-23.

⁶ Mark vi. 56, Matt. xiv. 36.

⁷ Mark i. 23-25, Luke iv. 33-35

⁸ Mark xii. 43^b fol. Luke xxi. 3 fol.

ould have hit upon the same expressions for whole passages
ether,¹ no matter whether it were a question of common or
common words?

If we felt tempted to explain the whole array of facts by
supposition that the writers were inspired, such a theory
uld at once be excluded by the equally numerous instances
divergency, which also extend from the merest matters of
n to the most important differences of fact. In the story
he healing on the Sabbath, which all three Synoptists tell
practically the same way,² Mark describes the situation
s : καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ ἄνθρωπος ἐξηραμμένῃν ἔχων τὴν χεῖρα ; Luke
s : καὶ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ καὶ ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ ἡ δεξιὰ ἦν ξηρά ;
Matthew thus : καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος χεῖρα ἔχων ξηράν.
is sounds as though each writer had chosen the expression
ependently to describe the same thing, but we might notice
en here that Mark agrees half with Luke and half with
Matthew, while the partial divergence between the three wit-
esses becomes still more striking in the succeeding sentences.
According to Mark and Luke 'they watched him' in the
agogue—though Luke names a subject, namely, the Scribes
d Pharisees—upon which Jesus himself propounds the
question, whereas in Matthew, Jesus is asked whether healing
the Sabbath be lawful. The question which Jesus sets his
versaries is given almost in the same words by Mark and
Luke, but quite differently, even in substance, by Matthew,
ereas then again Mark and Matthew agree in representing
the effect of this challenge on the Pharisees in a much stronger
ht than Luke. Matthew adds the parable of the leaven³
that of the grain of mustard-seed,⁴ which he had told in the
ne connection and often in the same words as Mark,⁵ and
ke also gives both together,⁶ agreeing far more closely

Mark xii. 44, Luke xxi. 4, ἐκ τοῦ περισσεύοντος αὐτοῖς ἔβαλον ; Mark vi. 56,
t. xiv. 36, ἵνα ἄψωνται τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ ; Matt. iii. 12, Luke
17, τὸ πύον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ, διακαθῆραι τὴν ἄλωνα αὐτοῦ ; Mark xiii. 25,
t. xxiv. 29, Luke xxi. 26, αἱ δυνάμεις . . . σαλευθήσονται, which is a
tation from Isaiah xxxiv. 4, rendered, however, in the Septuagint
θήσονται ; and finally Luke ii. 3, Matt. xii. 1, Luke vi. 1, 'through the
fields,' διὰ σπορίμων.

² Mark iii. 1-6 ; Matt. xii. 9-14 ; Luke vi. 6-11.

³ xiii. 33.

⁴ xiii. 31.

⁵ iv. 31.

⁶ xiii. 18 fol.

as to form with Matthew than with Mark, but tells them in an entirely different connection. And why does Matthew bring in the two breaches of the Sabbath¹ much later than Mark and Luke? How is it that the Sermon on the Mount of Matt. v.-vii., which is entirely absent in Mark, does indeed reappear for the most part in Luke, much of it even in the very same words, but scattered over ten chapters, from vi. to xvi., in small and separate sections? The birth-story of Matthew contradicts that of Luke, nor do the genealogies in the two Gospels agree any better, while Mark contains not a word of either. Luke and Matthew tell the parable of the lost sheep² in much the same way, but those of the lost piece of silver and of the prodigal son, which Luke brings in immediately afterwards, and which maintain the same tone and belong to the same connection, are entirely without parallel in Matthew. Matthew and Mark have practically nothing to correspond with the contents of Luke xvi.—the parable of the unjust steward, Dives and Lazarus, and certain sayings on the pride of the Jews and the validity of the Law—and the same may be said of the two stories of Sabbath healing in Luke xiii. and xiv. Matthew in his turn is the sole reporter of various long sayings like the parables of xiii. 36-52, or that of the labourers' hire,³ or the description of the Day of Judgment.⁴ The peculiarities of Mark, on the other hand, cover only a very few verses, and include but one complete section—that of the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida.⁵ How marked are the differences which occur, too, in the material common to all three is best shown in the story of the Resurrection—that is, in Mark xvi. 1-8 and its parallels in the other two Synoptics. The women who go to the sepulchre with spices early on the Easter morning are in Mark the two Marys and Salome, in Matthew the two former only, and in Luke they two and Joanna and 'other women that were with them.' In the sepulchre they see, according to Mark and Matthew, a young man (an angel of the Lord), and according to Luke two men in shining garments; the two former tell us that the Risen Lord appeared to his disciples first in Galilee, and therefore not on Easter-day at

¹ xii. 1-14.² Luke xv. 3-7; Matt. xviii. 12-14.³ xx. 1-16.⁴ xxv. 31-46.⁵ viii. 22-26.

all, while Luke relates appearances on this very day to (Peter ?), to the disciples at Emmaus and to the Eleven, all in or around Jerusalem. Such discrepancies and contradictions are so frequent with the Synoptics, even among otherwise identical phrases, that if we ascribed an equal value to all three reports, one of them would continually be cancelled and destroyed by the other two, so that we should be obliged to dispute the existence of any trustworthy tradition concerning Jesus. The Church has therefore just as strong an interest as historical science, in determining what relationship our three authorities actually bear to one another, and what well-attested kernel of truth can be extracted from this medley of contradiction and agreement.

2. The earlier ecclesiastical learning, as well as that of the older Protestantism, refused to recognise this state of things, and avoided the necessity of admitting variations in the tradition concerning the words and deeds of Jesus, by making 'Harmonies of the Gospels' in which the parallelism of any two accounts which differed in the slightest degree was denied ; so that a threefold feeding of the five thousand and a twofold of the four thousand had perforce to be admitted, merely in order to avoid the necessity of saying that the Evangelists differed in certain respects in their accounts of the same incident. Nevertheless, the Risen Lord cannot have appeared for the *first* time both in Galilee and Judæa, and are we to suppose, too, that immediately after his baptism Jesus was tempted of the devil *twice*, according to the same plan, only with the means arranged in a somewhat different order ? Even the early Church showed more courage and common sense than this ; men pointed to the natural differences of memory, nor was any objection raised—even by Augustine—to the theory that the later Gospels drew from the earlier, i.e. Luke from Mark and Mark from Matthew. No serious attempt, however, to master these difficulties by scientific methods was made till the latter half of the 18th century, and now the countless schemes for a solution of the Synoptic Problem may, in spite of all their differences of detail, be divided into four main hypotheses : (a) that of Tradition ; (b) that of the employment of one Gospel by the other ; (c) that

identified by some with the Gospel to the Hebrews, or is at any rate considered to have been originally written in Hebrew. From this the three Synoptists are supposed to have drawn, and hence their similar construction and their countless points of agreement in details and in expression. But in order to explain the striking differences between the three, we are obliged to admit the existence of several successive editions of this original Gospel, and to assume that each Synoptist possessed a different one—a theory which in reality only shifts the difficulties out of the clear domain of the Canonical Gospels into the darkness of a vanished literature, a literature over which the imagination alone holds sway, and whose early and complete disappearance would not be far short of a miracle.

An improvement on this view is offered by the Fragment hypothesis of Schleiermacher, which affords a far more adequate recognition of the idea that a variety of sources lie at the bottom of the Synoptics, as well as of Luke's reference to his many predecessors and of his criticism of them. He contends that not one Gospel only should be assumed as the fountain-head, but that in the earliest times there were a considerable number of scattered leaflets of very diverse bulk, upon which various persons had written down recollections of their intercourse with Jesus, or whatever they had heard from others in the way of sayings or unusually impressive deeds of the Lord. Such leaflets would naturally not have been preserved very long, and moreover whoever collected them must sometimes have lit upon duplicates which he did not recognise as such, because the accounts did not agree in every point, or perhaps even the occasion and the time were differently reported. If the Synoptists made use of as much of this floating literature as was accessible to them, it would certainly be conceivable that their reports would at times be word for word alike and at times entirely different, while the variations in the order would be especially easy to explain. But the existence of these fragments is more than doubtful; in the earliest times such aids to the memory would not have been required, and in the later men did not write down this or that particular saying, but made relatively complete collections of

separate sections in the collection of parables of Mark iv.¹ and Matthew xiii.² is also very instructive; Matthew brings in the whole of Mark except vv. 21-24, the essential points of which he had already introduced into chaps. v., vii. and x., while he replaces vv. 26-29 by what he considers a truer version of the same parable, and enlarges Mark's parable of the grain of mustard-seed by that of the leaven. That Luke, too, is directly dependent upon Mark, and not merely through the medium of Matthew, is shown, for instance, as early as iv. 31-44, where Luke brings in four sections in exactly the same order as Mark i. 21-39, whereas Matthew omits two of them altogether and inserts the other two considerably later, in chap. viii. Another instance is afforded by Luke ix. 18-50, where the writer, after borrowing nothing from Mark since verse vi. 45, returns to him quite suddenly in order to reproduce the passage from viii. 27 to ix. 40, regardless of the additions³ and omissions⁴ made by Matthew. Luke, on his side, only omits ix. 10-13—which Matthew had inserted at the same place as Mark—and this merely because the contentious questions of Pharisaic theology did not interest him.

But an exact study of the relationship of the Synoptics in the sections common to them all is far more convincing still. Let us take, for instance, the story of the man sick of the palsy.⁵ Here each of the three has made a separate introduction for himself, but in Luke's case some dependence on the *ideas* of Mark seems probable. After this, however, the similarity of the three accounts is so close that only dependence on a written source can explain it. Mark has three phrases—*καὶ ἰδὼν τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν*,⁶ *τί ἐστὶν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν . . . ἢ εἰπεῖν*,⁷ and especially verse 10, *ἵνα δὲ εἰδῇτε* etc.—which are reproduced word for word in Matthew and Luke, while verse 5 corresponds equally closely with verse 2^b of Matthew, and vv. 4, 7^b and 12^b with vv. 19, 21^b and 26 of Luke.

¹ Vv. 1-34.² Vv. 1-35, and cf. Luke viii. 4-18.³ Matt. xvii. 24-26.⁴ Mark ix. 38-40.⁵ Mark ii. 1-12; Matt. ix. 1-8; Luke v. 17-26.⁶ Verse 5.⁷ Verse 9.

Mark ¹ and Luke ² have the words ἐπιγινούς and διαλογίζεσθαι in common as against the ἰδών and ἐνθυμείσθαι of Matthew, and Luke's ἐφ' ὃ κατέκειτο ³ is surely a reminiscence of Mark's ὅπου ὁ παραλυτικὸς κατέκειτο.⁴ What Matthew and Luke have in common as opposed to Mark, on the other hand, are the words ἐπὶ κλίνης,⁵ where Mark uses the vulgar κράβατος, εἶπεν ⁶ where Mark has λέγει, περιπάτει ⁷ for Mark's ὑπάγε, and the repetition of the words εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ in the carrying out of Jesus' command. The effect upon the spectators is spoken of by Mark as an ἐξίστασθαι ⁸ and by Matthew as φοβεῖσθαι,⁹ while Luke calls it ἔκστασις and φόβον πλησθῆναι. That Mark's account is here the earliest may be assumed from the very vividness of his description; he tells us of the lack of space, of the uncovering of the roof, and that the paralytic was 'borne of four,' while Luke only speaks of 'men' as bringing him in, and Matthew makes no mention of any agent at all. Can we suppose that Mark derived his report from the descriptions of both Matthew and Luke, and yet succeeded in producing the freshest and most living picture? If, moreover, we take the peculiarities of the wording into account as well, and compare the extent and nature of the material shared by Mark partly with Matthew and Luke, partly with Luke alone and partly with Matthew alone, his priority is established beyond a doubt; and the only question it is still impossible to decide from an examination of this passage is that of the relationship between Matthew and Luke.

Again, let us compare Mark ii. 13-22 (the calling of Levi [or Matthew], the visit of John's disciples, the twofold parable of the new piece of cloth and the new wine) with its equivalents in the other two ¹⁰; nearly half this passage is told in the same words by all three writers, save that Mark has a much fuller introduction, and repeats the idea of verse 19^a in a slightly different form in 19^b—a pleonasm which Matthew and Luke naturally have not imitated. Of the remaining

¹ Verse 8.² Verse 22.³ Verse 25.⁴ Verse 4.⁵ Matt. verse 2; Luke uses κλινίδιον, vv. 19 and 24.⁶ Matt. vv. 2 and 4.⁷ Verse 5.⁸ Verse 12.⁹ Verse 8.¹⁰ Luke v. 27-39; Matt. ix. 9-17.

part Mark shares about half with Matthew as against Luke: e.g. verse 15, 'many publicans and sinners sat down [to meat] with Jesus and his disciples,' where Luke has 'there was a great multitude of publicans and of others,'¹ though in the next verse he tells us, in conjunction with Mark and Matthew,² that both publicans *and sinners* were sitting at table with Jesus. The word *ἰσχυόντες* a little further down³ is common to Mark and Matthew as against the *ὑγιαίνοντες* of Luke, while Mark 21 and Matthew 16 agree in such very unusual phrases—*ῥάκουσ ἀγνάφου, αἴρει τὸ πλήρωμα ἀπό, καὶ χεῖρον σχίσμα γίνεταί*—that all idea of chance is set aside. But Mark and Luke also agree in some points as opposed to Matthew: e.g. in the name Levi instead of Matthew, in the word *νηστεύειν*⁴ instead of *πενθεῖν*,⁵ in the antithesis between the new and the old,⁶ and in the words 'the wine will burst the skins.' On the other hand, Matthew and Luke keep together as against Mark only in the words *διὰ τί*⁷ for Mark's *ὅτι*, *εἶπεν*⁸ for Mark's *λέγει*, *ἐπιβάλλει*⁹ for *ἐπιράπτει*, and *ἐκχεῖται καὶ ἀπόλλυνται*¹⁰ for the simple *ἀπόλλυται* of Mark. Such alterations, consisting almost entirely of the most obvious polishings and simplifications, Luke need not have copied from Matthew nor Matthew from Luke, while the agreement between Matthew and Mark more especially, even apart from the sentences common to all three, is far too minute to admit of any explanation but that of literary dependence.

In Mark's version of the third prophecy of the Passion¹¹ there is much that agrees in every word with the reports of Matthew¹² and Luke,¹³ but we are struck by the still greater amount of material common to Matthew and Mark only, while, on the other hand, the words *ἐμπτύειν, ἀποκτενοῦσιν, ἐναστήσεται*¹⁴ of Mark are only to be found reproduced in Luke.¹⁵ The only thing common to Matthew and Luke without Mark is the word *εἶπεν*, where Mark has *ἤρξατο*

¹ Verse 29.² Mark 16; Matt. 11.³ Mark 17; Matt. 12.⁴ Mark 19; Luke 34.⁵ Matt. 15.⁶ Mark 21^b; Luke 36.⁷ Matt. 11.⁸ Matt. 12.⁹ Matt. 16.¹⁰ Matt. 17; Luke has *ἐκχυθήσεται καὶ ἀπολούνται*, verse 37.¹¹ Mark x. 32-34.¹² Matt. xx. 17-19.¹³ Luke xviii. 31-34.¹⁴ Verse 34.¹⁵ Vv. 32 fol.

λέγειν.¹ In fact, an exact statistical examination of the points of agreement and disagreement between the three Synoptics in the passages common to them all—most convincingly so, for instance, in the story of the entry into Jerusalem and in the parable of the husbandmen—almost invariably yields the following results: Mark coincides with Matthew and Luke to an astonishing degree, while the two latter without Mark only agree in such things as the insertion of a δέ, the pleonastic repetition of a λέγοντες or an ἰδόντες, or the substitution of ἄγειν for φέρειν, ἐρεῖτε for εἶπατε, εἶπε for λέγει. This holds good for the last three chapters too, at least for those parts of them into which Matthew and Luke have inserted no fresh episodes; and hence we may conclude that Mark did not skilfully weave his stories together out of both Matthew and Luke—for then we should be forced to assume that with an extraordinary partiality he always chose out those portions which were common to *both* his predecessors, while to explain the origin of those portions we should have to resort to some entirely new hypothesis,—nor that he drew, together with Matthew and Luke, from some original source now lost to us, for in that case it would be equally extraordinary that he should, practically without exception, have appropriated to his own use precisely those portions which had also been selected thence by the other two. Mark, then, served as the source both for Matthew and Luke. On the whole, Matthew has borrowed more from Mark *word for word* than Luke has done, but we may best see how closely Luke clings to him too, in examining those sections which are only to be found in Mark and Luke.² Whether in the passages shared by Mark with Matthew *and* Luke or with only one of the two, it is almost always easier to understand the divergencies of Luke and Matthew from Mark on the supposition that the two former had Mark before them, than *vice versa*.

It is also for the most part superfluous to assume the existence of an additional authority for the alterations made by Matthew and Luke in the text of Mark. It is quite natural that they should have moulded his reports into a form better

¹ Verse 32.

² E.g., Mark ix. 38-40 = Luke ix. 49 fol.; Mark xii. 41-44 = Luke xxi. 1-4.

suited to their own interests and tastes, and thus they simply omitted anything which seemed to them questionable¹ or superfluously detailed.² If, on the other hand, Matthew names the toll-gatherer summoned by Jesus, Matthew,³ while Mark and Luke speak of him as Levi; if Matthew introduces⁴ into the discussion on the Sabbath an argument about the sheep falling into a well, which Mark does not know, and Luke brings in elsewhere,⁵ or if Luke inserts at the end of a passage otherwise entirely dependent on Mark a verse peculiar to his Gospel alone—‘And no man having drunk old wine desireth new, for he saith, “The old is good”’⁶—these corrections and additions are certainly not due to the imagination of the writers, but still less do they prove that they had made use of another account besides that of Mark. They wove them in, either from some piece of oral tradition which seemed to them more trustworthy, or else because, having read them in some other written source, though in a different connection, they happened to call them to mind by a natural chain of thought just at these points.

This fact, then, that Matthew and Luke drew about half their material exclusively from Mark, can only be denied by those who neither can nor will form a true idea of the way in which these Evangelists went to work. In their eyes Mark was no sacred author whom they felt bound to copy down letter for letter—to quote, as it were. He belonged for them to the ‘many’ predecessors to whom Luke was consciously superior, and if Matthew knew of fewer such, he yet believed that he had something more perfect to offer than they—including Mark—had produced. They gladly kept to the report of Mark, whom they valued as a well-informed Evangelist. They followed him in many very essential points, even down to his wording, and it never occurred to them to procure as many other narratives as possible for the verification or

¹ E.g., Mark ix. 39, ‘for there is no man which shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me.’

² E.g., Mark xi. 14: ‘And his disciples heard it;’ xi. 16, xli. 43: τῶν βαλλόντων εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον, or the note prefixed by Mark, τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν, to the speech of Jesus in x. 32.

³ Verse ix. 9.

⁴ xii. 11 and 12^a.

⁵ xiv. 5.

⁶ Luke v. 39.

correction of his reports, and perhaps to adopt only such passages as did not contradict such other sources. They related quite freely and naïvely in their own tone things which they had often read in Mark, and they had no more fear of following him too closely than they had of differing from him in certain matters of fact. But besides the narrative of Mark, which held the first place in their affections, they were secretly influenced not only by their own personal interests, affections and literary peculiarities, but also by their education and training, especially by the Christian element therein. They must have heard tales and sayings of the Lord in other ways as well—in the church and in their private social intercourse—and much of this would remain firmly fixed in their memories. It would exert its influence on the way in which they reported this or that parallel passage of Mark, and sometimes, since these additional authorities can scarcely all have been bad, they may have preserved for us in their rendering of Mark, touches more primitive and more original than his.

5. But Matthew and Luke cannot be reconstructed only from Mark and a few scattered reminiscences from the preaching of the Gospel in the church. They have far too extensive a body of material in common which is unknown to Mark, and the literal agreement between them here is perhaps still greater than it was in those passages which they had deduced from Mark. In the extract from the preaching of the Baptist¹ there is scarcely a divergency between them. In the story of the temptation about half is identical in each, down to the very 'καὶ ἔστησεν ἐπὶ τὸ πτερυγίον τοῦ ἱεροῦ.'² The differences in the two reports of the parable of the talents³ are much greater, but even here there is no lack of remarkable coincidences, as in the final judgment, 'unto every one that hath shall be given,' and in the antithesis between *θερίσει* and *σπείρειν*, further back. In the parables of the thief at the door⁴ of the faithful and unfaithful stewards,⁴ the differences

¹ Matt. iii. 7^b-10, 12; Luke iii. 7^b-9, 17.

² Matt. iv. 5; Luke iv. 9.

³ Matt. xxv. 14-30; Luke xix. 11-27.

⁴ Matt. xxiv. 43-51; Luke xii. 39-48.

expression are again scarcely worth mentioning, and still more astonishing is the agreement between Matthew and Luke in the saying about the 'sign of the prophet Jonah.'¹ The short sayings of Jesus, too, most of which Matthew sweeps together into the Sermon on the Mount, while Luke has them scattered throughout his Gospel, are particularly interesting. Their literary relationship is obvious in nearly every case.² Moreover, Matthew cannot here be regarded as the authority of Luke, or Luke as the authority of Matthew, but, as we might have concluded from the observations made at the time of our comparison of them with Mark, both are drawing from an older source. In a large number of instances Luke appears as the later amplifier and interpreter: e.g. in ix. 60, where he adds the words 'but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God' to the saying of Matthew,³ 'Leave the dead to bury their own dead,' or in vii. 25, where he has 'they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately,'⁴ instead of Matthew's mere repetition of the preceding phrase, 'they that wear soft raiment'⁵; or, again, in the explanation of the parable of the son who asked a loaf of his father,⁶ where he promises the *Holy Spirit* as the gift of God, instead of the 'good things' (*ἀγαθά*) of Matthew.⁷ But, on the other hand, Luke's authority cannot have been Matthew, for what should have induced him to break up the beautiful grouping of the latter's Sermon on the Mount and to insert the fragments at haphazard here and there? And the Lord's Prayer as given in Matthew⁸ is to all appearances an amplification of Luke's version⁹—for who could credit Luke with an arbitrary curtailment of it? The 'quadrans,' too, of Matthew v. 26, is surely a later touch compared to the 'mite' (*λεπτόν*) of Luke xii. 59, and in Matt. vii. 22 the Logion of Luke xiii. 26 is simply taken and modified to suit the condition of a later generation. In a

¹ Matt. xii. 39-45; Luke xi. 29^b-32.

² E.g., Matt. vii. 11 and Luke xi. 13; Matt. vi. 29 and Luke xii. 27^b; Matt. v. 26 and Luke xii. 59; Matt. xi. 12 fol. and Luke xvi. 16.

³ viii. 22.

⁴ *ἐνδύχοντες*, a word which, while absent in Matthew and Mark, is highly characteristic of Luke.

⁵ Matt. xi. 8.

⁶ Luke xi. 13.

⁷ vii. 11.

⁸ vi. 9-13.

⁹ xi. 2-4.

vast number of points, in short, we are strongly impressed with the belief that an old groundwork has been added to now by Matthew and now by Luke : e.g. in the saying ' For after all these things do the Gentiles seek ' etc.¹ the words τοῦ κόσμου beside τὰ ἔθνη are certainly an addition of Luke's, while Matthew must have inserted ὁ οὐράνιος beside ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν, ἀπάντων beside τούτων, and καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην beside τὴν βασιλείαν. Or, again, in the saying of Matt. xxiii. 23 and Luke xi. 42, the ' mint, dill, and cummin ' of Matthew looks older than the ' mint and rue and every herb ' of Luke, but, on the other hand, Luke's ' ye pass over judgment and the love of God ' seems to deserve the preference over Matthew's modification, ' ye have left undone the weightier matters of the law, judgment and mercy and faith (πίστις).'

The abundant use by Matthew and Luke of a second written authority besides Mark can scarcely now be denied, but what sort of authority was it ? Its name is of no importance (some call it a Logia document, others an Apostolic source), but the main question is, was it a complete Gospel like that of Mark ? The answer to this question is undoubtedly in the negative, for there appears no trace of it in the stories of the Passion and the Resurrection ; what Matthew and Luke tell us there apart from Mark² they certainly did not draw from a common document. Sayings of the Lord, sometimes loosely attached to an historical fact, are what Matthew and Luke derive thence, and their introductions of them generally differ so widely that one is tempted to believe that this document contained as a rule no introductions at all. In that case it would have been a collection of the sayings of Jesus, composed without any exercise of conscious art, though doubtless not without some regard to the internal connection between them—in fact, very much what we are led by Papias to imagine that the work of the Apostle Matthew was. As far as we can still reconstruct this source from Matthew and Luke, it may very well have been of Apostolic origin. It must, however,

¹ Matt. vi. 32 fol. ; Luke xii. 30 fol.

² E.g., Matt. xxvii. 3-10 and 62-66 (the repentance of Judas and the guarding of the sepulchre), and Luke xxiii. 40-43 (the conversation with the malefactor) and xxiv. 13-3 (the disciples at Emmaus).

also have contained the *story* of the Temptation, for which it is absolutely necessary to assume that Matthew and Luke possessed a written authority other than Mark, and also an account of the preaching of the Baptist, which, to judge from Luke iii. 11-14, may even have been more detailed than that preserved in Matthew. Would this sort of material suit a collection of the Logia of Jesus? This may be affirmed without hesitation in the case of the three temptations, and, in spite of its legendary colour, we cannot say that the account is not such as an original Apostle might have believed and gladly transmitted; while in the other case it is quite easy to imagine, considering the close connection between the preaching of Jesus and that of John, that the document might have contained Logia of the Baptist before those of the Messiah. The interest it shows later on in the desert preacher—i.e. in Matt. xi. 2-19 and Luke vii. 18-35, a passage where the mutual relationship of Jesus and John is clearly brought out in both, and which is unknown to Mark—makes it very probable that it had already said something about him beforehand. The only real difficulty is that presented by the story of the centurion of Capernaum, whose servant Jesus heals from a distance.¹ Certain very remarkable touches of Luke's,² which he certainly did not invent, are absent in Matthew, and altogether in the earlier part the points of contact between the two are not considerable, but from verse 8 of Matthew onwards, where the centurion speaks and Jesus addresses him and his own followers, the literary connection with Luke is unmistakable. Yet here the two Evangelists were not drawing from Mark; for to claim the passage, purely for convenience' sake, as one originally belonging to Mark and then accidentally lost, is a very questionable proposal, particularly as the tone of Matthew 10-12 is entirely that of the other Logia. To presume a third authority for the sake of this one passage is not to be commended either, and we must therefore assume that the writer of the Logia document, in order to make the weighty words about the lack of faith in Israel and the many who should 'come from the east and the west and sit

¹ Matt. viii. 5-13; Luke vii. 1-10 and xiii. 28 fol.

² vii. 3-5.

down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven ' quite clear, for once related the incident that gave rise to them more explicitly than usual. This one exception is not enough to make his book a Gospel like Matthew's, counterpart of Mark, for, as is shown by another episode—the of the man with the withered hand ¹—it is not always easy to draw the border-line between the words and deeds of Jesus.

We may say, then, that *the second authority used in the Synoptic literature* (which for convenience' sake we will call *Q*) *served the purpose of handing down to posterity certain precious sayings of the Lord in an authentic form.* But since it was only reproduced very freely by Matthew and Luke, since its text is very seldom quoted literally by them, and since a complete absorption of its contents into the Gospels of the two borrowers is still less to be thought of, it is now impossible to reconstruct it. Its plan is as little determinable as its bulk, but it seems certain that the author did not arrange his collection upon a chronological principle, but grouped it catechetically according to its subjects: he wished to illuminate one after the other the main themes with which the teaching of the Church was concerned—such as prayer, confession, etc.—by means of sayings of the Lord. Of the character of *Q* we can only say that the incisive power and the unpretending simplicity of the words of Jesus are expressed in it to perfection. It contains no signs of the writer's having witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, but we may assume from Matthew xxiv. 43–51, and Luke xii. 39 following that he had already awaited the Parusia for a considerable time in vain. The years between 60 and 70 would therefore seem the most convenient assignment for it.

The question as to whether the Apostle Matthew ² or some other Christian familiar with the story of Jesus wrote down this book of Logia is of less importance than that of its language. Was it written in the Jewish tongue, and was it preserved unaltered for a considerable time? Since the agreement between Matthew and Luke is so particularly close, extending even to very unusual expressions, in the passages they borrow from this work, we are obliged to assume the

¹ Matt. xii. 9–14; Luke xiv. 1–16.

² See p. 307.

they used a Greek translation of Q as their common source. Its Aramaic substratum is unmistakable, for in Matt. xi. 17, for instance, the words ὀρχήσασθε—ἐκόψασθε rest upon an Aramaic word-play of *raqedton* and *arqedton*.¹ And to my mind the question is settled by the fact that whereas Luke in one of the 'Woes' on the scribes and Pharisees has 'Give for alms that which is within,' Matthew reads 'Cleanse first the inside' etc., a variant which is inconceivable as coming from the Greek, but perfectly natural if founded upon an Aramaic original, in which the words in question, *zakki* and *dakki*, might easily have been confused. The substitution of alms-giving for cleansing is certainly characteristic of the taste of Luke, but even apart from the fact that he probably did not understand Aramaic, it is impossible to attribute to him the translation of Q into Greek. The facts would best be accounted for by assuming that Q was originally an Aramaic document composed by Matthew between the years 60 and 70, that it was shortly afterwards translated into Greek, and that several different versions of this translation were produced, some of which made corrections in it (like the καθάρισον of Matt. xxiii. 26) according to a better reading of the Aramaic text, others inserted supplementary matter, and others again made arbitrary or formal alterations. Wernle (who, by the way, does not regard Matthew as the author of Q, though he does attribute it to some member of the original Apostolic circle; and believes that not Aramaic, but Greek, was its original language) puts down to one of these revisers all the Judaistic elements in Matthew's borrowings from Q (examples of which, in their pristine crudity, he professes to recognise in v. 17-20, x. 5 fol. and xiii. 3). He is certainly right not to regard the general tone of Q as Judaistic, but, on the contrary, to see in it the truest witness to the free and almost revolutionary Gospel of Jesus himself. But it is not likely that the Judaistic interpolations in Q should have sprung from a later hand; in so far as they are not really genuine words of Jesus they might far rather have been fragments of the tradition of the Primitive Community concerning him; the author of Q,

¹ Cf. Matt. xii. 41 fol. and Luke xi. 31 fol.

no less than Matthew or Luke,¹ put another meaning upon them, and was not afraid of their misuse in the interests of party strife.

On the other hand, an Ebionite version of Q has been traced by some in those passages of Luke which, as is proved by their parallels in Matthew—e.g. by the Beatitudes and 'Woes,' to quote the first examples—are derived from this document, but take a far stronger tinge of hostility to the world and its pleasures in Luke's case than in Matthew's. Additions of this kind, considering the growing inclination of the Church in this direction, may well have been the work of some reviser, just as they evidently suit the taste of Luke. But in them also a large part of the most genuine matter we possess from the mouth of Jesus may still linger; for the truth is that Jesus bore within himself something both of the Judaist and of the Ebionite, just as traces of both tendencies may be found in Matthew and in Luke. I shall not venture to trace the development of Q in detail as far as its final disappearance within the Canonical Gospels; but it is safe to assert that its course was chequered by not a few vicissitudes.

6. If we have here been able to acknowledge the truth that lies in the hypotheses of Dependence and an Original Gospel, we may now point out what is sound in the Tradition- and Fragment-hypotheses. Owing to the possession of collateral authorities, we are in a position to know where Matthew and Luke followed Mark and where they used the Logia collection. But there still remain large sections—nearly a quarter of Matthew and Luke—which have no parallel anywhere else: part of these might of course still be derived from the 'Original Matthew,' for just as Matthew and Luke constantly differ in their selections from Mark, so it must have been with their treatment of the other authority. In the 'Woes' against the Pharisees especially, there are many things peculiar to Matthew which convey the same tone as those which he shares with Luke, and we might also instance the saying about the eunuchs,² or that about

¹ Esp. xvi. 17. 'But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fail.'

² Matt. xix. 10-12.

the right way to pray,¹ or Luke's 'I came to cast fire upon the earth, and what will I, if it is already kindled?' which suit the tenor of the Logia document to perfection. But it would be a hopeless task to try and decide how far its influence extended over Matthew and Luke, when we can no longer control the one by the other. Certain it is that in both may be found materials which they must have drawn from sources otherwise quite indefinable. The Birth-stories etc., in both,² the picture of the Day of Judgment in Matthew,³ the above-mentioned additions in the last three chapters, and especially Luke's insertions of the stories of Zacchæus,⁴ of the Samaritan village,⁵ and of Mary and Martha,⁶ the parable of Dives and Lazarus⁷ (which he had himself received in a version that altered its original point), and also his mention of the ministering women,⁸ all bear a particular stamp, and must have had their special origin. Much of all this is manifestly the legendary product of later times, like the story of Judas, the guarding of the sepulchre, the appearance to the two disciples at Emmaus⁹ and practically everything in the first chapters of both Luke and Matthew. As a rule, the object of each story is unmistakable: that of the guarding of the sepulchre, for instance,¹⁰ arose out of the desire to refute and retaliate upon the slander spread by the Jews that the disciples of Jesus had stolen his body in order to proclaim him risen from the tomb. But I doubt whether the Evangelists who have preserved these narratives for us were also their creators; however unmistakable is the hand of Matthew in i. 22 fol., for instance, or in ii. 5 fol., it is not likely that he would have invented these occurrences himself merely in order to bring in the words of a prophecy; he would rather have made use of fragments of tradition—probably oral—which had crossed his path, and subjected them, though with still greater freedom than he had shown in dealing with written material, to his own ideas and his own design. The genealogy of Jesus, with which Matthew opens his Gospel, serves a wholly

¹ Matt. vi. 5-8.

² Matt. i. and ii.; Luke i. and ii.

³ Luke xix. 1-10.

⁴ Luke ix. 51-56.

⁵ Matt. xxv. 31-46.

⁶ Luke x. 38-42.

⁷ xvi. 19-31.

⁸ Luke viii. 1-3.

⁹ Luke xxiv.

¹⁰ Matt. xxvii.

problem as a piece of new 'dogma,' may yet feel it to be relatively the most probable—i.e. first, that of the mutual relationship between the two main authorities (Mark and Q) used by Matthew and Luke, and, secondly, that of the relation of these two Gospels to each other. According to the tradition, of course, Mark wrote from memory alone, merely reproducing the substance of Petrine lessons. And, on the other hand, it goes without saying that the man of the primitive Apostolic age to whom we owe the epoch-making collection of Sayings of the Lord, would not have used as his main authority a book so unproductive for his purpose as Mark, even granted that he knew Greek and was acquainted with the Gospel in question. The contrary would be by no means so improbable, in spite of the tradition. Professor Weiss does in fact assert that several passages common to all three Synoptics are derived from this 'Apostolic authority,' so that occasionally of course Matthew or Luke might have preserved it in a more faithful form than the older Mark. The proofs he adduces in support of this theory from a number of *narratives*¹ (for he regards the authority, not as a mere collection of Logia, but as a true Gospel, though one which, curiously enough, possessed no ending) are not very convincing; and even where the *sayings* of Jesus seem to bear a more primitive stamp in Matthew or Luke, we can always explain this by the fact that many of them must have been widely known throughout Christendom long before Mark was written, so that even a copyist of Mark might by trusting his memory have handed down some things in a more primitive form than Mark himself. But no one will doubt that certain words of Jesus, like the parable of the sower in Mark iv., or a great deal of the eschatological discourse in Mark xiii., were already contained in the Logia document, for the idea that Mark never coincided with anything in the other authority, that none of the Logia he preserves found entrance into Q, is wholly unintelligible. If Q obtained recognition very rapidly in Christian circles, it is surely most natural to suppose that in

¹ E.g., from that of the man sick of the palsy, Mark ii. 1 etc.; from the feeding of the five thousand, Mark vi. 35 etc., and from the healing of the blind man, Mark x. 46 etc.

those sections which were common to both, Mark's narrative would have been moulded under its influence. Moreover the remarkably small space which is granted in his Gospel to the *words* of Jesus, rather leaves the impression that the writer did not attempt any completeness in that respect,—an idea which, considering the enormous value which every syllable from the lips of Jesus possessed, would only be possible on the supposition that the propagation of the Lord's sayings had already been provided for. Mark did not write his Gospel as a supplement to the Logia document, but as an independent work; still, this does not make it impossible that he half unconsciously took his predecessor into account. It is, however, not conclusively *proved* that Mark had any written authorities, more particularly the 'genuine Matthew,' before him when he wrote. This would only be demonstrable if Matthew and Luke, in passages which were connected with undoubted portions of the earlier authority, but which were also to be found in Mark, agreed with one another against Mark so often as to exclude all idea of chance, and moreover presented a text which was obviously more primitive than his, so that Mark's motive in 'emendating' it would become apparent. This case, however, does not exist, so that we cannot get beyond hypotheses. Luke xvii. 2 certainly gives the saying about 'causing one of these little ones to stumble' in a more primitive form than Mark ix. 42 or Matthew xviii. 6, and yet in language so similar to Mark's that we are tempted to believe Luke's version to have been identical with Q, which was then used as the foundation for Mark and through Mark for Matthew; but might not Luke's text just as well have been a combination of Mark and Q?

In cases where similar observations may be made on narrative portions which cannot be referred to Q, (e.g. that a sentence of Mark's, in opposition to the great majority of data to the contrary, occasionally seems to be dependent upon Matthew or Luke and to represent the later version) the hypothesis has been started of an Original Mark, which is supposed to have undergone a more thorough revision in accordance with later standards than either Matthew or Luke, so that in its canonical form it might sometimes appear

as the later version beside its Synoptic parallels. It is true that Mark gives the saying of the 'unforgivable sin' in a later form than the other two¹; he alone ventures no longer in the case of blasphemy against the Son of Man to give an express promise of forgiveness. Matthew's version, again, of the saying 'I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new *with you* (μεθ' ὑμῶν) in my Father's kingdom'² seems more primitive than Mark's,³ where the words 'with you' have disappeared (Luke's version is still more modern in tone); but this verdict can only be applied to individual words or sentences in Mark, never to a complete passage, so that the data are insufficient to bear out this hypothesis of an Original Mark. The bad state in which the text of Mark has been handed down to us warns us to be careful, and it is always possible that in the case of material so widely known as this, the writer drawing from an earlier source may sometimes have corrected it from knowledge gained elsewhere, and so may even offer us a text identical with that from which his model's had arisen, perhaps through mere misunderstanding.

8. Of the *many* 'subsidiary' authorities used by Luke, Matthew may have been one—provided, that is, that Matthew was the earlier of the two, which has, however, not yet been proved.⁴ It is certainly safe to say that if Matthew was in existence at the time when Luke wrote, the Third Evangelist could scarcely have overlooked so brilliant a work in the course of his laborious researches, still less have deliberately left it unused, presumably out of some dislike he bore to it. Moreover Matthew and Luke coincide in a few points where Mark and the Logia document no longer serve as authorities: both, for instance, add to the mocking cry 'Prophecy!' of Mark xiv. 65 the words 'who is he that struck thee'⁵—both give the words ἐξήτει εὐκαίριαν⁶ (of Judas) where Mark contents himself with an ἐξήτει . . . εὐκαίρως; the simile of the lightning, which both employ—though in different ways—in

¹ Mark iii. 28 fol.; Matt. xii. 31 fol.; Luke xii. 10.

² Matt. xxvi. 29.

³ xiv. 25.

⁴ See pp. 381, 382.

⁵ Matt. xxvi. 68; Luke xxii. 64.

⁶ Matt. xxvi. 16; Luke xxii. 6.

describing the angel who guards the sepulchre,¹ is absent from Mark, and a few lines before² both use the by no means common word ἐπιφώσκειν to denote the earliest dawning of the day (though in Luke that day is the Sabbath and in Matthew the first day of the week). In the Birth-story the words of Matt. i. 21, 'she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus,' are almost identical in Luke.³ Some have even thought they could discover in Luke original passages of Matthew's own composition, and this would constitute a proof. But it is impossible to tell what was Matthew's own composition and where he was drawing from oral or written tradition, and in some cases his authorities may have been equally accessible to Luke. In any case the latter did not pay very much attention to Matthew; he tells quite a different Birth-story, and varies from him almost as much in the last three chapters. All we can definitely say is, that the points of agreement between Matthew and Luke in passages which both draw from the same source only extend *further* than the substance of that source in minor details which both might have hit upon independently, and that the turns of phrase characteristic of Matthew's own hand cannot be proved to exist in Luke. Thus it is not very *probable* that Luke was acquainted with Matthew as one of the 'many,' nor that Matthew made use of Luke. In my opinion, both took up their pens more or less simultaneously, each unaware of the other's work, and both actuated essentially by the same motive, i.e. that of bestowing a Gospel upon the Church which should at once be complete, and well adapted both to refute unjust accusations from outside and to edify the believers themselves. The employment of the same main authorities by both is the strongest proof of the fact that, in spite of Luke i. 1, the choice was limited, and the connecting links between the two great Synoptists and the events which they described fragile and precarious. They appeared just in time to save some portion of the old inheritance.

¹ Matt. xxviii. 3; Luke xxiv. 4.

² Matt. xxviii. 1; Luke xxiii. 54.

³ i. 31.

§ 29. *The Historical Value of the Synoptic Gospels*

[For the literature of the subject see *supra*, §§ 23-27. Also A. Resch, 'Agrapha,' and 'Ausserkanonische Paralleltex-te zu den Evangelien,' in 'Texte und Untersuchungen,' v. 4 (1889), x. 1-4 (1893-6). J. H. Ropes, 'Die Sprüche Jesu,' in 'Texte und Untersuchungen,' xiv. 2 (1896), a critical revision of the material which had been brought together with prodigious industry, but not sifted, by Resch. A. Resch, 'Die Logia Jesu nach dem griech. und hebr. Texte wiederhergestellt' (1898). At the same time appeared the edition of the Hebrew text ספר תולדות ישוע המשיח, דברי ישוע which was the crown of the fantastic edifice erected by Resch's brain.]

1. Since it is not for their own sake, but for that of the story which they tell, that we prize the Synoptics so highly, the most important question, after all, is how far they will serve in the reconstruction of the life of Jesus,—what is their value as historical documents. This, it may be said at once, is not unlimited. In any case, the narrative of the Synoptists cannot be called *complete*; Mark did not even aim at making his work complete, nor could we fail to believe (even if we had no knowledge of the many profound and probably genuine words of Jesus which have come down to us through non-Canonical literature) that what the Synoptists have preserved to us is only a fractional part of all that Jesus must have said and done during his Ministry. Their material is not sufficient to delineate even the outlines of the life of Jesus, except where a fruitful imagination ventures to supply the missing indications as to the date or occasion of individual occurrences, or the connection between them. But it is not only that the Synoptics know far less than we could wish about Jesus: what they know and tell is a mixture of truth and poetry. The sayings they report in absolute identical form—apart from possible variations in translation—would not take long to count, and wherever we can observe their methods we see how little they valued strict accuracy in the reproduction of their authorities, and how fully they felt themselves justified in treating the details with literary freedom, now curtailing and now amplifying them. The

ar of impairing historical truth was evidently unknown to them. Even if the remarkably different versions of the parable of the marriage-feast,¹ for instance, did not compel us to assume that one of the narrators at least deliberately modified the original version, the hand of the reporter is unmistakable in countless cases where the sayings of Jesus are concerned. So improbable a touch as that of Matt. xxii. 6, where the guests who are bidden to the banquet by the King, but who refuse to come, lay hold on his servants and *kill* them, was certainly not introduced into the parable by its original author, but by the Evangelist, who, in his eagerness for interpretation, was not thinking of ordinary guests, but of the Jews who persecuted the Lord's Apostles. Mark iv. 10-12 and 34 may serve to show how misunderstandings of many kinds could also injure the tradition; here Jesus describes the perverseness of the people as the reason for his speaking in parables, whereas according to the most natural interpretation of iv. 33 he was actuated by the opposite and only credible motive—that of speaking in similes because he could in that way be better heard and understood.

In Mark xi.² we are told that when Jesus was on his way from Bethany to Jerusalem he sought fruit from a fig-tree in vain and therefore cursed the tree, and that as his disciples passed by with him again *the next morning* they found it withered to the root. Matthew also relates the incident,³ but postpones Jesus' curse till the day after the cleansing of the temple, while in Mark it had taken place before it; thus in Matthew the withering of the tree occurs *immediately*, to the astonishment of the disciples. Is it possible to deny a tendency towards the increase of the marvellous in this example? Mark's anecdote of the feeding of the four thousand⁴ is a mere duplicate of that of the feeding of the five thousand which he had told just before⁵; the parallelism between the two is so striking that no other explanation is even arguable,—the one version simply arose through exaggeration of the other. In the one case four thousand persons after three days' fasting were fed with seven loaves and a few fishes, and leave seven

¹ Matt. xxii. 1 etc.; Luke xiv. 16 etc.

² Vv. 12-14 and 19-22.

³ xxi. 18-21.

⁴ viii. 1 etc.

⁵ vi. 34 etc.

basketfuls of broken pieces over, and in the other, five thousand men (Matthew expressly adding 'beside women and children') are fed with five loaves and two fishes, leaving twelve basketfuls of broken pieces. Again, the story of Jesus walking on the sea¹ is a kind of Docetic exaggeration of the beautiful tale of his stilling the storm,² while the instance brought forward by all three Synoptists, but most complacently by Mark,³ of his power over demons—that of the Gerasene swine—is nothing but the purest legend. Jesus is represented as having met 'a man with an unclean spirit' (or *two*, according to Matthew⁴) in the country of the Gerasenes, from whom he expelled a legion of devils; these, however, he allowed to enter into a herd of two thousand swine which were feeding close at hand, and which then immediately rushed down the steep into the sea—to the consternation, as may well be imagined, of the much injured owners. Mark and Matthew give us but one instance of a raising from the dead—that of the daughter of Jairus⁵—but Luke also tells that of the widow's son at Nain,⁶ placing it before the other,⁷ and the older Evangelists would certainly not have passed over so edifying and convincing a miracle as this of their own free will. In any case the public raising from the dead at Nain cannot, with Luke, be placed earlier than the secret one in the house of Jairus, but should probably be regarded as a later growth after the type of the primitive Jairus miracle. The Birth-story of Matthew (and still more certainly that of Luke) is wholly and entirely the work of pious fancy, and if in the relatively exact account of Jesus' last suffering and death we may reasonably expect particular trustworthiness—for who could possibly have invented the story of the denial of Peter,⁸ for instance, or the cry of Jesus on the Cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'⁹—yet even here, and in the oldest source, the legendary elements are not lacking, such as the statements about the darkness that covered the whole land, and the rending of the veil of the

¹ Mark vi. 45 etc.² Mark iv. 35 etc.³ v. 1-20.⁴ viii. 28.⁵ Mark v. 22 etc.; Matt. ix. 18 etc.⁶ vii. 11-17.⁷ viii. 40 etc.⁸ Mark xiv. 66 etc.⁹ Mark xv. 34.

temple.¹ Fresh touches were of course continually being added, like that of the guarding of the sepulchre² (which tended to assist the belief in the Resurrection), or like the words of Jesus on the Cross as given by Luke, 'Father, forgive them,' etc., or the few words to the malefactor—those infinitely touching illustrations of a love which, even in the midst of death, sought only to excuse its tormentors, and held itself open to the anguished prayer of the meanest sinner.

By far the greater part of this material, the authenticity of which is more than doubtful, was not invented by the Synoptists, but was derived by them from oral or written authorities. They themselves were generally responsible only for the form, in the arrangement of which they certainly exhibited considerable freedom, though always in the full belief that they were able to reproduce the traditional material more effectively than anyone else had done before them. It is true that they did not apply historical criticism to the materials they used, but if they had, no Gospels would have been written, and their artificial productions would have fallen into oblivion a few decades after they appeared. Edification was for them the standard of credibility; their task was, not to understand and estimate the historical Jesus, but to believe in him, to love him above all else, to teach men to hope in him: they did not describe the Jesus of real life, but the Christ as he appeared to the hearts of his followers, though of course without dreaming of the possibility of such an antithesis.

2. Nevertheless the Synoptic Gospels are of priceless value, not only as books of religious edification, but also as authorities for the history of Jesus. Though much of their data may be uncertain, the impression they leave in the reader's mind of the Bearer of Good Tidings is on the whole a faithful one. Brandt is not wrong, but he does not say enough, when he calls the Synoptic picture of Christ the finest flower of religious poetry. The true merit of the Synoptists is that, in spite of all the poetic touches they employ, they did not repaint, but only handed on, the Christ of history. They indeed omitted many of his great words, either through forgetfulness or

¹ Mark xv. 33 and 38.

² Matt. xxvii. 62 etc. and xxviii. 11-15.

ignorance, they misunderstood many of them, and altered the form of others, and it may even have chanced that they or their authorities wrongly attributed to Jesus some saying which, though worthy of him, really came from the lips of some other master. But the modern Jewish attempts to treat the Logia of Jesus given by the Synoptics as a partisan selection of 'rays of light' from the far richer wisdom of the Rabbis—merely because there exist some parallels, sometimes of remarkable closeness, between them and the Mishna or the Talmud—are just as irrational as the views of that school of criticism run wild, which regards these sayings as the mere deposit of the moods and ideals which held sway among the first three generations of Christians. The mass of homogeneous parables alone, which we find in the Synoptics, compels us to fall back upon a single personality as the author of a mode of teaching not elsewhere adopted at the time, or at least not in the same way; for how could the age of the Synoptics, which degraded and deformed the parables into allegories, have first produced them, to its own bewilderment? And the same may be said of nearly all those isolated sayings of Jesus which the Evangelists misunderstood, or the interpretation of which causes them so much trouble—as in Matt. xxiii. 36, where the author makes the awkward addition of τοῦ ποτηρίου τὸ ἐντός, thereby destroying the meaning of the word; while the sayings actually invented by the Synoptists—such as the frequent references of Jesus to his approaching sufferings—immediately betray their external origin by their monotony and their absence of life. But, as a rule, there lies in all the Synoptic Logia a kernel of individual character so inimitable and so fresh that their authenticity is raised above all suspicion. Jesus must have spoken just as the Synoptists make him speak, when he roused the people from their torpor, when he comforted them and lovingly stooped to their needs, when he revealed to his disciples his inmost thoughts about his message of the Kingdom, when he guided them and gave them laws, when he contended fiercely with the hostile Pharisees and Sadducees, or worsted them by force of reasoning:—for no otherwise can we explain the world-convulsing influence gained by so short a life's work. The impression that they are veritably the words of

Jesus is by no means altered by the fact that they contain side by side things Jewish and things anti-Jewish, things revolutionary and things conservative, things new and things old, freedom and conventionality in judgment, crudely sensuous hopes and a spiritual idealism which fuses present and future into one; for he who was destined to become 'all things to all men' in a far higher sense than Paul must have been able to comprehend within himself the elements of truth in all antitheses.

Nor should the Synoptic accounts of the deeds and sufferings of Jesus be judged in a less favourable light. It matters little how many of the miracle-stories fall to the ground, whether he healed one blind man or three, and how often and under what circumstances he waged his victorious war against sin and its attendant miseries, illness, want and death: the main point which each of these more or less embroidered stories seeks to illustrate, and which only a very sorry rationalism can deny, is that he not only taught but acted 'as one that hath authority.' The fact that he wrought miracles principally upon the mentally diseased, as in Mark i. 32-34, and the observation made by Mark¹ that because of the unbelief of his countrymen at Nazareth 'he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them,' enable us in some degree to guess the secret of his success. Stories like that of the 'Talitha cumi' of Mark were not elaborately invented, nor was the Messiah who in his night-watch in the Garden of Gethsemane, though his 'soul was sorrowful even unto death,' yet won through prayer the strength to go forward to the end, in spite of the blindness of his disciples, the wickedness of his foes and the agony of a horrible death—such a Messiah was not the creation of the idealising fancy of any class of believers, which would have employed far different colours.

Again, the figure of the traitor among the Twelve, or the story of Peter denying his Master before the cock crew, are not the mere products of Christian imagination, however much *may* have been imported into their details by legend or theology. Must Pilate and his favourable opinion of Jesus have

¹ vi. 5.

continual discussions with their fellow-countrymen, of whose conversion they would not despair, than they were to the Apostle of the Gentiles, whose object was to arouse faith in a forgiveness of sins and in an eternal life and blessedness through Christ; and it was these words, whose super-Jewish sublimity and anti-Pharisaic boldness no one could deny, which did still more than the *scandalon* of the death on the Cross to repel the majority of Israelites from such a Messiah.

Neither in Palestine nor among the Gentiles in foreign lands, however, could the preachers of Christ confine themselves to handing on the characteristic utterances of their Lord: every catechumen as well as every believer must have been repeatedly told the story of his death and resurrection, and his miracles were also appealed to as the proof of his having been anointed 'with the Holy Ghost and with power.'¹ This *primitive* interest in his history, both in his deeds and his fate, should not be underrated; in discussion with the unbelieving Jews it was important to be able to prove by concrete examples that his life corresponded closely with the Messianic prophecies (or expectations), that he had walked the earth possessed of divine power, endowed with supernatural majesty, and in every way as the Son of God, and that he had fulfilled the will of God just as much by his suffering and death as he had sealed it by his Resurrection. But the mission to the Gentiles was no less in need of this witness to the Saviour, afforded by deeds of omnipotence and by the fulfilment in him of ancient prophecy; it was not only the school of apologists inspired by Justin (A.D. 150), but Paul himself, who brought the *κατὰ τὰς γραφάς*² into the foreground in dealing with possible Hellenic converts, side by side with reports of the life and death of Jesus. And, in spite of his contempt³ for the Jewish demand for 'signs,' he must have regarded the signs and wonders which were the necessary credentials of an Apostle⁴ as absolutely natural in the case of the Messiah, and must have extolled them in fitting language before his hearers. From this point of view, as the foundation of trust in Jesus, his gospel, and his revelation, the *acts*

¹ Acts x. 38.² 1. Cor. xv. 3.³ 1. Cor. i. 22.⁴ Rom. xv. 19; 2. Cor. xii. 12.

(*πράξεις*) of Jesus might well seem the most important matter of all.

Nevertheless, the relation between the two sides of Gospel tradition, the sayings and the narratives, has been very aptly compared with that which exists in the eyes of Jewish orthodoxy between the Halacha (doctrine, interpretation of the Law) and the Haggada (continuation of the sacred history). The *stories* seemed merely to lead the reader to Jesus, while it was in the *sayings* that men possessed his actual self. This division is frequently to be met with; Irenæus,¹ for instance, boasts of having heard Polycarp relate both the teaching and the miracles of Jesus (*καὶ περὶ τῶν δυναμέων αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδασκαλίας*), and wherever we find any comment on the relationship between them, the miracles are looked upon as the preparation for the teaching. And, above all, we must remember that the *Logia* of Jesus were already in existence in the form which he himself had given them, so that any alteration of their wording could only be a change for the worse, while in the case of the stories about the Lord his followers had first to learn how to tell them, so that there the form was merely human handiwork. Indeed, a later comer with an entirely different version might perhaps materially improve the narrative of a fellow-believer who had already told the story of some miracle many times. Thus the stereotyping of the Gospel material—as far as it occurred at all—took place much earlier and more successfully in the case of the sayings of Jesus than in that of the stories of his life; though since the Christian communities, even in Palestine, were from the outset much scattered, it could never become complete even in the case of the sayings. Expressions would be forgotten here which were remembered elsewhere; recollections would be revived in one place and left in obscurity in another; thoughts would be strung together here and left in their separate form there, and so on, and we should be obliged to assume a sort of central inspection of the Gospel tradition, exercising its functions with great rigour and still greater good fortune, in order to make it seem probable that there was any

¹ Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* V. xx. 6.

considerable uniformity in that tradition before the period of the *written* propagation of the Gospel.

Papias tells us that the Apostle Matthew inaugurated this period by writing down (of course in the popular dialect of Palestine) a collection of Sayings of the Lord. None but certain modern theologians who are anxious to reproduce the Original Gospel by re-translation from the Greek, but who do not know Aramaic, declare that Matthew wrote in the sacred language, the Hebrew of the Old Testament. We do not doubt the statement of Papias,¹ and it is to the eternal credit of the primitive community that it preserved to the Church the Jesus of history, as well as the Christ of the believer's reflection. We know nothing definite as to the motives which induced this Apostle to take up his pen, but it can only have been when the number of ear-witnesses of the words of Jesus had considerably diminished, and the need arose of handing on the substance of his Gospel, under the authority of an eye-witness and in permanent form (i.e. in writing), to a rising generation who had neither heard nor seen the Lord. The author probably aspired as little to any exhaustive completeness as he did to accuracy of chronological sequence; nor could he have attained to either, since his memory and his opportunities for investigation had their limits, and the community, moreover, had never been at all anxious to know *when* Jesus had uttered a particular saying (any more than *when* he had wrought a particular miracle), but only *what* he had revealed and what he had promised. The Logia document of Matthew probably consisted in a selection of the most important words of Jesus known to the writer, made with all possible fidelity and with a timid endeavour to reproduce some larger groups by arranging them according to their subjects. Greek literature possessed similar collections of the utterances of wise men (*ἀποφθέγματα*) in considerable numbers. And that such logia-books were renewed even in later times is proved by the discovery at Oxyrhynchus, published in 1897 by Messrs Grenfell and Hunt under the title of *Λόγια Ἰησοῦ* ('Sayings of our Lord, from an early Greek Papyrus'), in which apparently we have a Christian of about 300 A.D. making a collection

¹ See pp. 306, 307.

sayings pure and simple, all of them introduced by the words λέγει Ἰησοῦς. How opportune was the undertaking of Matthew was proved by its success; even in the Greek communities it was soon felt to be indispensable, and preachers interpreted it as well as they could until good written translations did away with the necessity for such separate efforts, and at last actually supplanted the Aramaic original altogether. The collection as such was not regarded as Scripture, and only the word of Jesus which it contained was sacred; how can we wonder, then, that the copyists were no more servile in their treatment of its text than the unknown translators? Wherever it was possible to make an edifying insertion, to explain, to correct by the light of a different tradition, or perhaps even to rewrite in another form, it was done; one translation would be corrected by another, and thus perhaps not two copies of the Logia document would finally have been exactly similar in every part. This would have been another reason for its disappearance. But it probably did not entirely disappear till the complete Gospels rendered further competition impossible, and made the document itself superfluous by appropriating all its contents.

It is impossible to say whether in this transition between the Apostolic and Post-Apostolic ages, other similar collections arose—either suggested by the example of Matthew or else independently of him—or not. But even if they did, they would not have included all the sayings of Jesus which were in circulation at that time, and thus it would be possible even after 100 years and more had passed away to draw from the fuller, though certainly less limpid, oral tradition certain sayings—beside much that was of little value—which, though not Biblical ('Agrapha'), yet have the true ring about them, like the 'Be ye true money-changers' (γίνεσθε δόκιμοι τραπεζίται) so often quoted by the Fathers, or the logion from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, 'And ye should never be glad except when ye look upon your brother in love.'

The first step in the conversion of the Gospel material into literature was necessarily followed by others. A legitimate need of the community for an account of their Saviour

in full, especially in his suffering and death, but, above all, the need felt by the Christian teachers of possessing a document to which they could appeal in their battles for the true Messiah against unbelievers, which would provide them with the means of demonstrating that Jesus was the Beloved Son of God, in spite of all apparent failure and defeat—such needs were met soon after 70 by Mark. Either, however, because he knew that his readers were already fairly familiar with the Sayings of the Lord, or else because they were less necessary for his purpose, he laid special stress upon the narrative side. He may have been assisted in this task by his recollections from his intercourse with Peter, but as a matter of fact he did not care very much *whence* he drew any particular episode, so long as it suited his book. Mark is, moreover, obviously influenced by theological considerations; certain features in his account of the Passion clearly betray their origin in the author's desire to see the prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled. Thus the spitting upon Jesus,¹ the buffeting and scourging,² come from Isaiah l. 6, the silence of Jesus³ from Isaiah liii. 7, his crucifixion between two robbers from Isaiah liii. 12, the casting of lots for his raiment from Psalm xxi. 19 (and xxii. 18). But the fact that he does not quote the Old Testament parallels seems to favour the view that Mark did not think out these things for himself, but followed the tradition here as elsewhere. And in the case of the trial and execution of Jesus—events for which the Christian community itself was not able to procure any trustworthy witness—the process of reconstruction naturally began on the very first day. The task of depicting in accordance with God's Word the manner in which the Messiah *must* have suffered and died was one to which the Apostles themselves might gladly have given their assistance.

Similar productions must have arisen in considerable numbers between the years 70 and 100, for Luke speaks of *many* predecessors; 'many' may not indeed mean 25 or 100, but certainly more than two, and this is sufficient evidence that the demand again and again exceeded the supply, and that the idea of the stability and uniformity of the tradition is imagi-

¹ xiv. 65.² xv. 15, 19.³ xiv. 61.

nary. The mutual relationship of these productions was probably very much confused; but we may assume that all of them made use of oral traditions in various degrees as well as of written authorities. Those of them which were not saved, like Mark and Matthew, by admission into the Canon, disappeared; the apocryphal Gospels of the second century, such as those according to the Hebrews, to the Egyptians, to Peter, of which some parts have been preserved, and probably also a Gospel fragment from a papyrus found at Fayoum (a parallel to Matt. xxvi. 29-34), to which Professor G. Bickell of Vienna enthusiastically assigns a very high place—all these are in reality modified versions of the Canonical Gospels, written to suit sectarian or heretical tendencies; but that is no reason why occasional fragments of primitive tradition should not have found their way into them. Luke and Matthew, however, seem already to stand at the point where the production of Gospels ceased to be a gain to the Church and began to mean danger only, and even John must share in this judgment to some extent; from Luke onwards the writing of Gospels fell into the hands of romancers and religious philosophers, or rather perhaps of theologians and theologasters, and the Church did well to pay but scant attention to their productions. Moreover Luke set up a fatal ideal with his ‘all things accurately *from the first*,’ for the later writers omitted his inward qualification, ‘as far as I could find out anything about them,’ and peopled with the creations of their own fancy just those periods of the life of Jesus which had till then remained almost empty—i.e. his youth and the days immediately following his resurrection. These Gospels of the Childhood and the Ascension have no longer any connection with the tradition, except where they borrow from the Canonical Gospels, and it would be absurd to take them seriously into account as authorities for the history of Jesus, especially in the case of those Gospels which were only composed in order to furnish ‘Evangelistic’ proofs for the peculiar dogmas of some Gnostic school. In both these *genres* the Gospel story merely serves as the means to some ulterior end. Matthew produces the impression of being slightly further removed from this sort of writing than Luke, because, in spite of

his additions to Mark at the beginning and end, he is still fairly reticent about the history of the Risen Christ, and contents himself in his Birth-story also with two or three edifying pictures. Luke, on the other hand, has a very highly coloured early history, which extends as far as Jesus' twelfth year; his Resurrection chapter is nearly three times as long as Matthew's, and instead of the one cry which according to Mark and Matthew Jesus uttered on the Cross—'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?'—he puts three other sayings into the mouth of Christ which express, not torture and anguish of soul, but their contrary.¹ These three words were unquestionably unknown to Mark and Matthew, nor can they, in spite of their beauty, have been founded on tradition; they are rather the expression of what the faith of later Christians saw in the heart of their dying Redeemer. But Luke readily poetised, and incorporated poetry, while Matthew did so only in case of need; this difference, however, between the personalities of the two writers need not imply a difference of date between their respective productions. Each of the three Synoptics contains some elements invented independently of the tradition, but even these have their value, since they were not the products of mythologising art, but the half naïve conversions into fact of things of which Jesus was believed capable, closely connected, too, both in style and tone, with the best-attested passages in the Gospels. That Luke contains a far greater abundance of those elements than either Matthew or Mark is, however, compensated for by the fact that he alone has preserved to us a succession of the noblest gems of the Gospel tradition, which, but for his fortunate hand, would have been lost to mankind.

As long as the Gospel material was still in a plastic state, before the canonisation of certain definite forms of it, three different periods may be distinguished: first, that of oral transmission (between the years 30 and 60), when the holders of the tradition, unconcerned for the wishes of future generations, but compelled by the religious duties of the moment, kept the main outlines of the Gospel story fresh and living in the minds of the community; secondly, that of the Synoptic

¹ xxiii. 34, 43 and 46.

record (from about 60 to about 100), when, after an Apostle had laid the foundation of a Gospel literature, 'many' writers, among them Mark, Matthew and Luke, created in similar fashion (since all were in closest touch with the tradition) and by selection from the materials still available, a written presentation of the Gospel story, clear, connected, and neglecting none of the points of primary importance; and thirdly, that of the fabrication (from the beginning of the second century onwards) of apocryphal Gospels, when the living tradition was exhausted, the religious necessities of the majority satisfied by the great existing Gospels, and the passion for further production, if it did not manifest itself solely in the emendation of older Gospels to suit various dogmatic prejudices, found an outlet in the actual manufacture of new material. The first period was the richest in its aggregate possessions, but the individual, even a Paul, for instance, possessed but fragments; the second effected by crystallisation into writing a consolidation which, in spite of the decrease of material, was yet a step in advance; and after 100 begins the decadence. Later generations sought to conceal their imitation of the ancients and to produce the appearance of wealth by remodelling well-attested matter in accordance with later tastes, or else by bringing together a mass of fables that were wholly unattested. The Gospel descended to the market-place, while the prominent appearance in it of other personalities robbed it of all its peculiar charm. The Church showed great tact in refusing to countenance these so-called Gospels, and we have good grounds for supposing that in the Synoptics she has handed down to us the best that ever existed under that title, and that the Gospel story was never and nowhere so truly, fully and plainly told as in Mark, Matthew and Luke.

B. JOHN

§ 30. *The Gospel according to John*

[Cf. works mentioned at § 23. For commentaries see Meyer, ii., by B. Weiss (ed. 8, 1893); 'Hand-Commentar,' iv., by Holtzmann (ed. 2, 1893); C. E. Luthardt, 'Das Johanneische Evangelium' (1875-76); F. Godet, 'Saint Jean.' The last two take the apologetic side entirely, but Luthardt with slightly more

perception of the difficulties than Godet. Further, O. Holtzmann, 'Das Joh. Evangelium untersucht und erklärt' (1887); F. Spitta's article on 'Unordnungen im Texte des vierten Evangeliums,' in 'Zur Gesch. und Liter. des Urchristentums,' part i. 1893, pp. 155-204; W. Baldensperger, 'Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums' (1898), which reconstructs a new historical background for the Fourth Gospel with equal boldness and skill (on this question compare W. Wrede in 'Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen' for 1900, pp. 1-26) and H. H. Wendt, 'Das Johannesevangelium—Eine Untersuchung seiner Entstehung und seines geschichtlichen Wertes' (1900), a defence of the hypothesis that certain earlier written records from the Apostle's hand were embodied and recast in the discourses of the Fourth Gospel. Lastly, C. Weizsäcker's chapter on the Fourth Gospel in his 'Apostolisches Zeitalter' (1892), which will always remain a classic (pp. 513-538, and cf. 476-486).]

1. The Gospel of John has been credited by lovers of the mysterious with a construction devised with the most exquisite art; that is, with a system of trinities (*Dreieiten*) carried out with equal persistency in small things¹ as in great. The writer himself, according to this theory, did not perceive the greater part of them, and the most contradictory views have been put forward with equal justice as to his own intentions in the matter of arrangement. In reality one section usually fits into the next by its very form, and larger divisions can be suggested at many different points almost as well as in the single case of chapter xiii., after which the Gospel unfolds the passage of Jesus to the Father in a variety of scenes, whereas up to that point it had described his activity on earth alone.

The Prologue (i. 1-18) expounds in short, terse sentences what really forms the subject of the Gospel. Jesus is the incarnate 'Word,' the universal Reason which has been with God from all eternity, and he has now come down among us men to bring us grace and truth and the perfect knowledge of God. Upon this John the Baptist, who had already been mentioned in the Prologue² as a witness to the only-begotten Son, leads up through a series of other witnesses to the first public appearance of the Son of God, for whom he was to prepare

¹ E.g., i. 1 * b and c.

² i. 15-18.

the way; a group of disciples gather round Jesus, and Nathaniel repeats the testimony of John.¹ Next, Jesus manifests his glory by performing his first miracle, the conversion of the water into wine at the marriage at Cana.² From Cana he journeys through Capernaum to Jerusalem and there cleanses the Temple³; he finds faith even among the rulers of the Jews, one of whom, Nicodemus, comes to him by night and holds converse with him about the second birth.⁴ Jesus' activity as baptiser next calls forth fresh testimonies from John,⁵ and on his journey through Samaria he reveals himself to a Samaritan woman as Prophet and Messiah, while other Samaritans believe on him 'because of his word.'⁶ On his return to Galilee he heals the nobleman's son at Capernaum.⁷ The subsequent feast of the Jews takes him again to Jerusalem, where at the Pool of Bethesda he heals by a single word the man who had been infirm for thirty-eight years, thereby breaking the Sabbath and being obliged to defend himself against the Jews.⁸ The feeding of the five thousand on the other side of the Sea of Tiberias next leads to the sayings in which he calls himself the 'bread of life' and speaks of the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood, upon which a division occurs in the ranks of his disciples.⁹ At the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem matters come to a collision between him and the Jews, who are already planning his destruction; the fools among them will not hear at any price of a Galilæan Messiah.¹⁰ An episode¹¹ tells how he set free the woman taken in adultery, whose judges had all disappeared because none dared cast the first stone at her and thus inflict the punishment to which she was liable in the eyes of the Law. Then follow further disputes with the Jews,¹² in which Jesus seeks to demonstrate the contrasts, typified by himself and them, between light and darkness, above and beneath, freedom and bondage, the children of God and the children of the devil—all this leading up to the healing on the Sabbath of the man born blind,¹³ at which the

¹ i. 19-51.

² ii. 1-11.

³ ii. 12-25.

⁴ iii. 1-21.

⁵ iii. 22-36.

⁶ iv. 1-42.

⁷ iv. 43-54.

⁸ Ch. v.

⁹ Ch. vi.

¹⁰ Ch. vii.

¹¹ vii. 53-viii. 11.

¹² viii. 12-59.

¹³ Ch. ix.

wilful blindness of the Jews is fully brought to light. He declares himself the good shepherd who collects his scattered sheep into one flock and is willing to lay down his life for them, but the unbelievers, those who are 'not of his sheep,' see in him one possessed with a devil; and later on, when at the feast of the Dedication in Jerusalem he announces plainly—in answer to a question from the Jews—that he is the Christ, and even that 'he and the Father are one,' his hearers threaten to stone him for blasphemy.¹ The last section of this first part, x. 40–xii. 50, shows the breach complete between the Christ and the mass of the Jews; in the very detailed account of the raising of the four days buried Lazarus, Jesus reveals himself as the Resurrection and the Life, but before this² he suffers himself to be anointed as though for burial by the sisters of Lazarus in Bethany. Then in Jerusalem, which he enters amid cries of Hosanna,³ himself conscious of approaching death, he sets the great decision for the last time before the people. A few Greeks indeed seek him out, a voice from Heaven announces his approaching glorification in the presence of the multitude, but he finds but little faith among the people, and even among his followers there are many who do not venture to acknowledge him.

From chapter xiii. onwards he devotes himself solely to his disciples; the action of washing their feet, which he performs after a meal, is made the occasion for the expulsion of the traitor Judas; and throughout the next three chapters⁴ he addresses those long-drawn parting speeches to the Eleven in which he exhorts them to remain steadfast in love, in prayer and in him, the true Vine, even after his departure; promises to send them the 'Paraclete,' the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father, as a substitute for his own presence, and finally comforts them with the thought of the hour of re-union, when there would be no more 'speaking in proverbs.' Then follows⁵ the 'High-Priestly' prayer for the glorification of the Son and all his disciples. The story of his suffering, death and burial fills the next two chapters; three appear-

¹ x. 1–39.² xii. 1–11.³ xii. 12–15.⁴ xiii. 31–xvi. 33.⁵ Ch. xvii.

ances of the Risen One—to Mary, to the Eleven and to Thomas—are described in chapter xx., and the Gospel appears to end at verse 30; then, however, another chapter follows in a supplementary manner, telling of the miraculous draught of fishes which the risen Christ causes his disciples to make in the Sea of Tiberias. The end is formed by prophecies concerning the death of Peter and of the Beloved Disciple.

2. The peculiar character borne by the Gospel of John, differing as it does so markedly from the Synoptics that even a child learning its Sunday lesson would notice it, cannot be explained by the ostensible purpose ascribed to it in xx. 31. The Synoptics, too, were written in order to bring their readers faith in Jesus as Messiah and as the Son of God, and thereby to give them eternal life in his Name; and if John expressly declares¹ that he did not attempt to make his record complete, the same may certainly be said of Mark. It is rather that the special 'tendency' of the writer gained an infinitely greater influence over the Gospel material in John than in the case of the Synoptics. Let us but compare the Prologues of Luke and of John: in the former it is the interest of the historian that is displayed in 'those matters which have been fulfilled among us,' he wishes to relate 'all things accurately from the first,' while in the latter the theologian sums up in terse phrases the truths which every reader must bring with him in order to study the Gospel story in the spirit of piety. This Prologue, in fact, contains the whole of the Gospel *in nuce*. It contains the melody, the *Leit-motiv* (especially vv. 11–14) which rings in our ears again and again amid a mass of variations. The instrument to which the composer is bound is the earthly life of Jesus, and thus everything which we learn in the Fourth Gospel has the sound of history, but the important thing is not to hear the history, but to catch the melody through it, and to satisfy the soul with the enjoyment of it. But it is certainly an exaggeration to think that the miracle stories existed in the mind of John only as allegories, as disguises for his own metaphysical and religious thoughts, for we should then be obliged to extend this theory to the story of the Passion as well, which is out

¹ xx. 30, and cf. xxi. 25.

of the question; Nicodemus, too, and Nathaniel are meant to be taken as historical personages just as seriously as John,¹ Simon Peter,² Thomas³ or the High Priest Caiaphas.⁴

The writer believed the marriage at Cana to have been an actual event, the changing of ordinary water into noble wine to have taken place on that occasion; he does not intend the man 'blind from his birth' of chapter ix. to be a symbol of those who were as yet unenlightened, who had never seen God, nor his Lazarus to be a personification of the creature subject to decay, in the sense of Romans vii. 24 and viii. 20. But he treats almost all these persons as mere framework; they vanish as suddenly as they appear, as in the case of Nicodemus and of the Greeks who wished to see Jesus.⁵ The Evangelist only takes an interest in them as long as he can make use of them to reflect some feature of the inner life of Jesus. The miracles, in fact, attest the divine omnipotence of Jesus, the sayings his divine omniscience, and the double meanings conveyed in both strengthen in a manner characteristic of the author's taste the impression of the unique greatness, the *fulness*,⁶ of Jesus. The Fourth Evangelist certainly did not undervalue the evidential power of miracles in awakening faith, as may be seen by ii. 11 and 23, but he places a still higher value on knowledge than on power, and this explains the marked preponderance he gives to the words of Jesus, which he regards as indispensable commentaries even on the miracles.

But, more than this, John does not paint the wonder-working Jesus as one who used his power to exercise compassion, to banish trouble and misery and to dry the weeping eyes; touches like Luke's 'And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her . . . and he gave him to his mother'—even the very words for 'compassion'—are not to be found in John; here the actions of the Saviour, who knows well how to appreciate love,⁸ are not directed towards removing the petty ills of the day, but solely towards the ultimate goal of pointing out the division between the children of God, and

¹ Chaps. i. and iii.

⁴ xi. 49.

⁷ Luke vii. 13 fol.

² Chaps. xiii. and xxi.

⁵ xii. 20-22.

⁸ v. 42, xiii. 35 and Ch. xv.

³ xx. 24.

⁶ i. 14 and 16.

the children of the world who had given themselves over to perdition. God loves the world only in so far as it is his work and contains the germ of eternity, nor are we bidden to love the world or the sinner, but Light, God and the brethren. The one-sidedness of the central idea of John, upon which all the words—and deeds—of Jesus turn, is, after all, its chief characteristic; Jesus lifts up his voice, not in order to explain the riddles of life and of history, to supply his hearers with advice for their practical conduct or with precepts for the new morality (as in the Sermon on the Mount), or to solve certain problems of the Jewish faith and Jewish philosophy, such as those of healing on the Sabbath, true cleanliness, or the resurrection of the dead; wherever he is not speaking as a Prophet in order to reveal his omniscience, or in parables in order to test the understanding of his hearers, he has one constant theme—*himself*, his relations to the Father, to the world and to those who believe in him, and through all this the fulfilment, the completion of the *Scriptures*. This gives the Gospel a remarkable monotony; sublime as its ideas are, they are but few, repeated again and again and expressed in scarcely differing forms; and this impression is strengthened by a certain poverty of vocabulary and a sameness in the manner of presentation.

At first sight, John appears to be constructed with more skill and to attain a higher unity than Matthew itself. Whereas the Synoptics usually string their material together by external links only, John creates a sort of drama, in which later events constantly refer to earlier,¹ and the chronological thread is never lost sight of; from the first appearance of Jesus to the end we may always know exactly where the action takes place, nor is there any lack of definite indications of time and place, such as Cana, Bethany, Sychar in Samaria, the 'two days' of iv. 40 and 43, or the 'midst of the feast' and the 'last day, the great day of the feast,' of chapter vii. But we are inclined to feel that by this constant change of scene an appearance of movement is artificially produced of which the

¹ E.g., iv. 15 to ii. 23; iv. 46 (and 54) to ii. 1-11; vii. 23 to v. 8 and 9; iii. 33 to vii. 33 fol. and viii. 21 fol.; xv. 20 to xiii. 16, and xviii. 14 to xi 9 fol.

reality is entirely lacking; not only is there no space left for any development in Jesus himself: there is not even room for it in his relations with the world and in his achievements. He himself—quite in accordance with the dogma of the Gospel—is the same on the first day as after his Resurrection; we are told nothing of his birth, nothing of his baptism, of his sojourn in the wilderness or even of his temptation. Even the division of mankind into believers, enemies, and waverers, is there from the beginning. That he was joyfully acclaimed at first from all sides, then that the people grew suspicious and in open disputes applied the test of Jewish standards to his piety and authority, in order to destroy him at last with all the hatred of disappointment—such a course of events has not left the slightest trace behind it in the Fourth Gospel.

Next to the Prologue, John reveals himself most clearly as the *interpreter* (not the reporter) of history in those insertions which he loves to make in the substance of his narrative. Such additions are also to be found in the Synoptics, especially when these describe the occasion for an important saying of the Lord's (e.g., Luke's 'And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard these things; and they scoffed at him' ¹), but they are confined to a few indispensable parentheses, whereas in John the writer uses them to make his readers entirely dependent upon *his* interpretation and *his* judgment; ii. 21 fol. is characteristic of this, and so is 24 fol., 'But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and because he needed not that anyone should bear witness concerning a man, for he himself knew what was in man.' ² These observations of the writer's are made in exactly the same tone as the discourses of Jesus, and it is impossible to separate them from the context; occasionally even one may seriously doubt whether the speaker is Jesus or the Evangelist, and in i. 16-18 some hold it to be the Baptist, others the writer, a fact which proves how subjective *is* the character of the report and how completely the Gospel material is here steeped in the individuality of the writer. To

¹ xvi. 14, and cf. xviii. 1 and xix. 11.

² Cf. vii. 39, x. 6, xi. 13, xii. 16, 33 and 41: 'These things said Isaiah, because he saw his glory, and he spake of him,' i.e. Jesus.

unfold the right interpretation of Christ—that is, of Christianity—before his readers' eyes, is the writer's sole desire, and therefore we cannot expect him to give us vivid pictures from the life of Jesus; he did not even succeed in reaching a living realisation of what he wished to tell, and hence the inconsistencies and self-contradictions of his story: as when he assumes a thing to be known in chapter xi.¹ which he only relates in chapter xii., or when in chapter xvi.² Jesus foretells an event to his disciples which according to ix. 22 had long since come to pass.

John's mode of presentation is also characterised by a remarkable uniformity. The construction of the sentences is Hebraistic,³ and there is an entire absence of the true period; final clauses are the only subordinates which are at all unusually frequent, and generally the writer merely likes to co-ordinate his principal clauses, while a sort of rhythmical solemnity is imparted to his language by his habit of expressing his more important thoughts in two parallel sentences: e.g., 'He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me.'⁴ Or again, 'He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life, but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life.'⁵ As examples of his circumstantial mode of expression, which cannot indulge too largely in repetition,⁶ we may take i. 20, 'And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed . . .' or i. 32, where the words 'And John bare witness, saying . . .' divide the speech of John—which is by no means long in itself—quite superfluously into two halves. In the remarkably small vocabulary of the Gospel, abstract ideas, like 'to believe on,' 'to bear witness of,' 'witness,' 'love,' 'life,' are relatively the best represented, while certain concrete words used in a metaphorical sense, such as 'light,' 'darkness,' 'vine,' 'bread,' 'water,' have not the effect of a true image in vivifying the language, because their new meaning is already stereotyped; illustrations of a

¹ Verse 2.² Verse 2.³ E.g., in the placing of the predicate first, which occurs almost without exception: e.g., xviii. 12-27.⁴ xii. 44 fol.⁵ iii. 36, and cf. p. 249.⁶ Cf. xviii. 15 and 16, and xvii. 14^b and 16.

parabolic nature, like those of the travailing woman of xvi. 21, and the 'friend of the bridegroom' of iii. 29, are exceptional.

The most curious point, however, is the regular system displayed in the arrangement of the discourses; though they appear to flow on spontaneously in conversational form, with alternating speeches—for even in the leave-taking discourses of chapters xiii.–xvi. Peter, Thomas, Philip and Judas are made to step in with separate questions¹—they are in reality all made after the same pattern. Whether Jesus is conversing with Nicodemus, with the 'Jews,' with the Samaritan woman or with his own disciples, the process is the same: an introductory question is answered by him with an ambiguous sentence² which the questioner misunderstands; Jesus then corrects the mistake, and if a second question shows that he has done so effectually, he gives further and more detailed instruction on the subject which is in truth his only one, and upon the understanding of which everything depends. Almost in the same words as the woman of Samaria, with her 'Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not,'³ do the Galilæans beseech him 'Lord, evermore give us this bread'⁴; and the answers in the two cases are not less similar. Thus instead of the endless variety of real history, what we find in John, down to the most trifling details of form, is the monotonous, systematising tendency of an historical construction as incapable of plain narrative as it is indifferent to historical detail.

3. It would seem impossible that any doubts should exist as to the integrity of a Gospel whose individual features are so sharply defined as these. Nevertheless the texts of all the Gospels have come down to us in a state which leaves free scope for a critical reconstruction of the wording of individual passages,⁵ and even John has been emendated and added to by the dogmatic tendencies of later generations. Textual criticism, then, has long since decided that the paragraph

¹ xiii. 36, xiv. 5, 8 and 22; cf. xvi. 17 fol. and 29 fol.

² E.g., ii. 19, 'Destroy this temple,' etc.; iii. 3, 'Except a man be born from above (*ἄνωθεν*)'; iv. 10, 'living water'; iv. 32, 'I have meat to eat that ye know not.'

³ iv. 15.

⁴ vi. 34.

⁵ E.g., John i. 18, where there is a question as to whether we should read 'only begotten Son' or 'only begotten God'; v. 4, x. 8, xxi. 25.

about the woman taken in adultery—which is to be found, by the way, in two very different recensions—was interpolated into the Fourth Gospel by accident from an external source; very few old Greek manuscripts contain it, nor are the earlier Latin Fathers acquainted with it; Blass nevertheless regards it as an original part of his Roman recension of Luke, in which he complacently finds a home for it at xxi. 36; Eusebius tells us that he read it in Papias and in the Gospel to the Hebrews, and if Papias endowed it with the authority of a John, the motive which induced the unknown copyist (perhaps in the third century) to insert it into the Fourth Gospel would not be far to seek. From internal evidence alone we should be obliged to declare it spurious, for both in tone and diction it departs very widely from its context; but neither its beauty nor its credibility sustains any injury from the removal of its 'Apostolic authority'—it remains the noblest of Agrapha.

It is not so easy to pronounce decisively upon chapter xxi. At first sight everyone would assume it to be a supplement added by another hand. The Gospel possesses an admirable conclusion in the last two verses of chapter xx.; the idea that the writer inserted it when making the fair copy, merely in order to fill up a page which would otherwise have remained blank, is scarcely to be taken seriously, and if he was the Beloved Disciple himself, he could never have forgotten or intentionally have passed over the appearance of the Risen One related in chapter xxi. Again, verse 24 sounds like the testimony of younger disciples concerning the writer of xx. 30 and 31, and the principal object of the supplement might have been to justify the death of John by a saying of Jesus, seeing that it had occurred, contrary to all expectation, before the Parusia. The locality of chapter xxi. alone seems to point to some stream of tradition not otherwise made use of in John, for whereas chapter xx., like the Gospel of Luke, tells only of appearances in Jerusalem, chapter xxi. transfers such a scene to the sea of Tiberias in Galilee. Of course, the notion that this chapter was taken from another Gospel and merely tacked on to John is inadmissible, for vv. 1 and 14 refer distinctly

to chapter xx., and the interest of the narrator in chapter xxi. is limited to John's Gospel, which he merely wished to complete. On the other hand, we find that the tradition knows of no Fourth Gospel without chapter xxi., that in mental attitude, tone and vocabulary the latter corresponds entirely with the Gospel (as in verse 19^a, for instance, a parenthetical remark on the double meaning of the miraculous draught of fish), so that the disciple who is here supposed to have added to the Gospel must have worked himself into the mental individuality of his master in a truly wonderful manner. He must even have known that master's innermost intentions better than the Evangelist himself, for an essential part of the Gospel would be wanting if, while xviii. 15 fol. tell us that Peter and the Beloved Disciple were the only ones among his friends who followed their Master after his arrest, and xx. 2-4 that they alone hastened to the grave on the first day of the week to ascertain whether he had actually quitted it, yet when their Lord had risen again they were not held worthy, like the Magdalene, of a special appearance from him. In xx. 21-23, Jesus had imparted their mission to his disciples; what special charge had he to lay upon his most faithful pair? It is this question to which chapter xxi. gives the answer; the testimony of the departing Son of God, that the Beloved Disciple should tarry till his return, sets the seal upon the witness borne by this disciple throughout the Gospel to the Son of God; nor are even vv. 24 fol. written by a different hand, but by the same interpreter to whom we owe verse 19^a. The last two verses of chapter xx. were not originally intended as the ending of the Gospel, but, like xix. 35, constituted a sort of editorial addition inserted into the body of the story, like the phrase 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear' of the Synoptics and the Apocalypse. It is perfectly in accordance with the writer's manner that we are not prepared beforehand for a change in the scene of the visions; as he appears to bring the farewell discourse to an end at xiv. 31, and yet takes it up again in a still more exalted tone in chapter xv., so he appears to bring the Resurrection story to an end at xx. 31, and yet adds to it one of its most important parts; xx. 30 and 31 are but one

of the writer's many exhortations to his readers to use his book aright; he does not really take leave of them until xxi. 24 fol.

The passages in John, however, which have been struck out by critical censors are far from being confined to chapter xxi. and vii. 53-viii. 11. The schemes for its dissection are by this time almost innumerable. Critics have attempted to prove that whole sections—among others an account of the Last Supper—have disappeared from the Gospel, that others have been moved to the wrong place,¹ while others² again are later interpolations. Or else a considerably shorter original Gospel is reconstructed (this view is held by Weisse, Schweizer, Renan, Wendt and Delff) by declaring either the 'Galilæan' sections, or the majority of the miracle stories, or the great discourses to be interpolations. The Prologue is pronounced spurious, except for the fragment comprised in vv. 6-8, which is indispensable as an introduction to i. 19 fol., and as a witness to which the anti-Christian controversialist Celsus, who flourished about 170 A.D., is appealed to; the theologian who added the remaining verses, it is contended, did so with the intention of bringing the Gospel into line with Alexandrian metaphysics, but not only did the want of connection between vv. 6-8 and what immediately precedes and follows them betray the later composition of those parts, but the two main ideas of the Prologue, those of the Logos and the Charis,³ disappeared without a trace in the rest of the Gospel. Most of these suggestions are prompted solely by the wish to save at least a groundwork of Apostolic authorship for the Gospel, even though the whole of it could not be ascribed to the Apostle; but such a wish, as the starting-point for critical hypotheses, is extremely suspicious. These hypotheses must, however, be rejected *in toto*, because they do not take into account the similarity both in form and matter which extends to every part of the Gospel—for even the miracle stories are indissolubly connected with the discourses that precede and follow them.⁴ The Prologue is the

¹ E.g., vv. vii. 15-24 and chaps. xv. and xvi., the proper places for which are said to be respectively between v. 47 and vi. 1, and after ver. xiii. 31*.

² E.g., vi. 51-59.

³ Vv. 14, 16 and 17.

⁴ E.g., chaps. ix. and xi.

most indispensable part of all; it bears the very stamp both of the other explanatory insertions of the Evangelist and of the Johannine discourses of Jesus; but the writer was prevented by the fineness of his tact from putting a Greek philosophical term like 'the Word' into the mouth of Jesus himself or even of his disciples, and wherever Jesus speaks the general term 'grace' is replaced, in accordance with the old tradition, by the more particular 'salvation' (*σώζειν, σωτήρ, σωτηρία*). Add to this that it is impossible to discover any obvious motive for the interpolations. The irregularities and contradictions which are relied upon to support such hypotheses are the very characteristics of John.¹ The critics too often set up the standard of their own logic, their own attention to details, their own demand for a correct succession of events, in short, a Gospel such as they themselves would write it, as their guide, whereas the task which John set himself (that of carrying out his ideal of the Christ in the actual history of Jesus, and of using materials drawn from a tradition still partly entangled in the things of the flesh for the representation of a spiritual Christ) was not attainable without certain inconsistencies, since the form prescribed was far too inflexible for the new matter it was to contain.

4. (a) In order to ascertain the date at which the Fourth Gospel was composed, we must first examine its relation to the other Gospels we possess, i.e. the Synoptics. It is almost universally regarded as certain that John was a later production, because the Synoptics are all utilised in it. It is true that the differences between them are far more extensive than the points of agreement, for, apart from the Passion story, only a very few passages of John are unquestionably paralleled in the Synoptics—of the discourses, indeed, practically none but xii. 25–31—and of course any literal copying-down of an earlier document is not to be thought of in the case of a writer who dealt with his material in so independent a fashion; but sufficient traces have nevertheless remained of his acquaintance with the older works. In the story of the anointing (xii. 1–11), verse 8 is word for word identical with Matt. xxv. 11, which is itself an abbreviation of Mark xiv. 7; in verse

¹ See pp. 246 and 391.

Jesus speaks of his being anointed for burial in much the same manner as in Mark 8 and Matthew 12, while the selling of the ointment for three hundred pence and the deprecating 'Let her alone' are shared by John with Mark only. Finally, the remarkable identity in the description of the ointment, where the dependence of the one on the other is indisputable,¹ leaves no further room for doubt. The dependent writer can, however, only be John, for instead of following Mark and Matthew in saying that the ointment was poured over the head of Jesus, he relates how Mary anointed the feet of Christ and wiped them with her hair—a trait taken practically word for word from Luke's account,² which is itself a variant of the story based upon Mark. In the same way we may observe in comparing John's description of the Entry into Jerusalem,³ or of the feeding of the five thousand,⁴ or even large parts of his story of the Passion,⁵ with their Synoptic equivalents, that John, though never binding himself slavishly to his predecessors, is yet influenced by them even in matters of expression. All other explanations of these facts are unsatisfactory, since the points of agreement between John and the three Synoptists are inextricably intertwined, and extend to the peculiar property of each. This relationship alone, then, will prevent us from assigning the Fourth Gospel to any date before 100 A.D.

(b) That John made use of the Pauline Epistles in the same way as he employed the Synoptics cannot be asserted with so much confidence. It is true that in reading his work we are reminded often enough of Pauline ideas and phrases—most frequently of those of Romans,⁶ Corinthians and Ephesians—and the Epistle to the Hebrews, too, might have been known to him; but we must not expect to find in his work any literal transcripts from these writings. His theological position certainly implies a knowledge of the Pauline

¹ John has *μύρου γάρδου πιστικῆς πολυτίμου*; Mark is identical, except for the word *πολυτελοῦς* for *πολυτίμου*, and Matthew has *μύρου βαρυτίμου*.

² Luke vii. 37-50.

³ John xii. 12 etc.; Mark xi. 1-11; Matt. xxi. 1-11; Luke xix. 29 etc.

⁴ John vi. 1-14; Mark vi. 30; Matt. xiv. 13; Luke ix. 10.

⁵ John xviii., e.g., the judgment of Pilate, *οὐδεμίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν*, beside Luke xxiii. 4, *οὐδὲν εὐρίσκω ἄτιον ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τούτῳ*, and especially xix. 1-3, 15-19, 29 and 38.

⁶ Cf. John viii. 34 and Rom. vi. 16; John xii. 38 and Rom. x. 16.

teaching; he presents us with a modification of the Pauline theology characteristic of a time when the great differences of the first period were overcome, when compromise was no longer possible with Judaism, and when Christianity had long begun to feel itself a *new* religion, or rather *the* religion in contradistinction to the godlessness of the world. Paul and the Apocalypse still look upon the name of 'Jew' as a title of honour, which they were by no means inclined to surrender to the unbelieving Hebrews; John, on the other hand, regards 'the Jews' from the very beginning as a body alien and hostile to the Lord and his followers, and this evidently represents the state of things which existed when he wrote the Gospel. The two main theses of Paul, those of the universality of salvation and of the freedom of faith from the Law, have entered into the writer's very marrow; in v. 11 we are told that the Son 'quickeneth *whom he will*,' and xi. 52 is still more explicit.¹ We read of Samaritans and Greeks as well as 'true Israelites' pressing to hear him, and behind the words about the one flock and the one shepherd,² and the prayer 'that they may be one,'³ the idea rises up distinctly of the *one* Church in which there were no distinguishing degrees; John could never have written those words of the Epistle to the Romans about the 'advantage' of the Jew.⁴ The man who points the contrast between the law given by Moses and the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ,⁵ or between Moses, who was not the giver of the 'bread from heaven,'⁶ and the Father who gave the true bread from heaven in the person of the Son he sent into the world; the man who claims obedience only for the commandments or commandment of Jesus⁷ and repeatedly designates the Law as the Law of the Jews⁸—such a man had not only broken with Judaism in his own person, but in his time the Church had long ceased to be concerned with questions of circumcision, Sabbath-observance and forbidden meats. The Johannine theology arose through the simplification of the Pauline; it allowed a

¹ Cf. x. 16 and xvii. 6.² x. 16.³ xvii. 11 and 22.⁴ τὸ περισσὸν τοῦ Ἰουδαίου, Rom. iii. 1.⁵ i. 17.⁶ vi. 32.⁷ xiv. 15 and 21, xv. 10 and 12, or verse xiii. 34, 'the new commandment' (cf. xii. 49 fol.).⁸ viii. 17, x. 34, xv. 25.

number of favourite Pauline theories, like the self-abrogation of the Law, or the atoning power of Christ's death upon the Cross, to drop, because they were no longer necessary; the process of salvation is much less complicated with John than it is with Paul, for the substance of John's story consists in nothing but the perpetual struggle between the flesh and the spirit, the Father and the world, darkness and light. The descent into the world of the only-begotten Son, who offered the highest good to all men and demonstrated his divinity in the clearest way, necessarily put an end in principle to this struggle; the hitherto commingled elements separated themselves; to see Jesus was to see the Father,¹ and meant truth and life, and whoever denied this henceforth was lost beyond all further help, while he who recognised it aright possessed all things therein.

The absolute significance of the Person of Christ is still more sharply emphasised here than it is by Paul; the image of the Jewish Messiah is completely lost sight of, and the pre-existing Messiah of Paul, who renounced his Godhead, assumed the image of man, and humbled himself so low for the purposes of God that God rewarded him by exalting him still higher, giving him the name of Lord and judging him worthy of adoration, becomes with John the 'Word' that was with God from all eternity, the creator of the world, who allowed his glory to be seen for a short time in the flesh, and then returned again to the Father, not to new honours, but to the place he had occupied of old, where he was now preparing the abode of his faithful flock. Here, too, beside the ancient phrase 'that the *Scripture* might be fulfilled,'² we find another taking equal rank with it—'that the *word of Jesus* might be fulfilled'³; Jesus, in fact, decides his own fate and determines what is his; xii. 48, where the rôle of the world's judge is given to the *word* which Jesus speaks, is another case in point: one might almost be tempted, indeed, to draw a parallel between it and the Word of God which assumes the

¹ xiv. 9 fol.

² E.g., xiii. 18, xvii. 12, xix. 24 and 36; and cf. xii. 38 and xv. 25,

ἡ πλὴρωσθὶς ὁ λόγος ὃ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν γεγραμμένος.

³ xviii. 9 and 32, which refer back to xvii. 12 and xii. 32 fol.

productions. All other points of contact with Gnostic writers, certain phrases bordering on Docetism in reference to the bodily nature of Jesus, the dissolution in the Prologue of the pure Monotheistic idea, the dualistic foundation of the Gospel, these belong in an equal degree to most of the other ecclesiastical writers of that time. But the fact that the Fourth Evangelist could write a Gospel with a purpose (*Tendenz-Evangelium*) without a trace of anti-Gnostic purpose, surely shows that Gnosticism had not as yet begun to be a serious danger to the Church, or at any rate to that part of it which lay within his field of view. The Gospel of John thus appears to lie before Jude and the Pastoral Epistles.

But with this we come to the all-important question as to the authorship of John, upon a right solution of which our understanding of its nature, purpose and value depends in a far greater degree than is usually the case with such a problem.

§ 31. *The Johannine Question*

[Besides the books mentioned in the foregoing section, cf. E. Schürer's 'Über den gegenwärtigen Stand der johanneischen Frage' (1889), and, following upon this, A. Meyer's 'Die Behandlung der johanneischen Frage im letzten Jahrzehnt,' in the 'Theologische Rundschau' for 1899, part ii. pp. 255-263, 295-305 and 333-345. Also P. Corssen's 'Monarchianische Prologe zu den 4 Evangelien,' in 'Texte und Untersuchungen' xv. 1, 1896, esp. pp. 103-117.]

1. Ever since, in 1820, Prof. K. G. Bretschneider brought forward strong reasons for declaring it impossible to conceive the Fourth Gospel as the work of an Apostle, the dispute as to whether the tradition were right or wrong has become ever keener. The orthodox opinion, that in his old age the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, wrote his Gospel at Ephesus as a last testament to the Church, is held by the one side as positively as it is rejected by the other.

The favourite argument for the Fourth Gospel's Apostolic authorship is the particularly distinct and early attestation

of it. It is certainly true that wherever John was used in the Church from the third century onwards, it was regarded as the work of the son of Zebedee; only the Alogi of Asia Minor rejected it, even before the end of the second century, but that was scarcely on the ground of better or even of divergent tradition; their contemporaries Irenæus and the author of the Muratorian Fragment, whose dogmatic ideas took no exception to the book, had no doubt whatever that it originated with the Apostle John. The still older traces of acquaintanceship with John prove nothing either way, because no statements are made concerning its author. For instance, although in Irenæus V. xxxvi. 2, the 'Presbyters' quote the words 'In my Father's house are many mansions' as a Saying of the Lord, it is certainly probable that they had read those words in the Fourth Gospel; but this does not help us in any way to decide under what name they read that Gospel. It is our duty to examine the tradition narrowly, and to test its various constituents according to their antiquity. Thus it is proved by the absolutely trustworthy testimony of Irenæus,¹ that about the year 130 Polycarp boasted of the fact that he had known and had intercourse with John and others who had seen the Lord. No one has any doubt that by this John Irenæus meant the son of Zebedee, the same whom he mentions in II. xxii. 5 as the witness for a fragment of tradition concerning Jesus; and in III. i. 1 he declares expressly that this John, the disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast, published the Gospel at Ephesus in Asia. Innumerable witnesses now follow in his train, whose information as to the occasion for this production and especially as to the reason why the Apostle took up his pen even after the Church had received three Gospels from the hands of Apostles or of their disciples, becomes more and more precise. Thus about the year 200, Clement of Alexandria² had heard from older authorities that after the other Evangelists had imparted the *corporeal* Gospel, John had at the instigation of his friends and in the might of inspiration created a *spiritual* Gospel. Thus a satisfactory formula was at the same time provided for the enormous difference—of

¹ Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* V. xx. 4.

² *Ibid.* VI. xiv. 5 and 7.

but now it seems as though our informant never approached any nearer to him than he did, say, to Thomas or Matthew. Papias does not breathe a syllable of the two Johns in Asia whose existence Eusebius concluded from this passage: he merely tells us of two disciples and elders named John. And since the inventors of the hypothesis of the two Johns had an all too obvious interest in doing so, and since the story of the two graves at Ephesus will scarcely impose upon any historian acquainted with the Legends of the Saints, the long-lived son of Zebedee dwelling in Asia seems by the testimony of Papias to be replaced by another John who lived far on into the time of Papias and was accessible to him, so that he may in truth have dwelt in Asia; and this John we may perhaps designate—even though the title was by no means regarded by Papias as peculiar to him alone—as the *Presbyter*, in order to distinguish him from the *Apostle*.

This assumption appears to be confirmed by the testimony of Polycrates,¹ who in enumerating the Pillars of the Church in Asia gives the first place to Philip, *one of the Twelve Apostles* (though he is here labouring under a delusion, for it was the deacon of Acts vi. 5 and viii. 5 fol.), and to his prophesying daughters, and only the second to John, who leaned on the breast of the Lord, and who lay buried at Ephesus, while the third he assigns to Polycarp of Smyrna. The order is remarkable; and why does not John receive the title of Apostle if he belonged to the ranks of the Apostles? These and the like considerations have given rise to the hypothesis (urged with particular energy by Bousset, Delff and Harnack) according to which the John of Asia Minor—and of the Johannine writings—was only converted into the son of Zebedee by an early confusion of ideas, and was in reality another John, who had indeed seen Jesus, but who did not belong to the circle of the Twelve—in short, the *Presbyter*. The testimony of Justin is, however, very unfavourable to this hypothesis, for he regarded the John of Patmos and Ephesus as the son of Zebedee, and yet must surely have acquired this opinion in Asia, where he was converted. No does the appeal to Polycrates hold good, for in the emotional

¹ Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* V. xxiv. 3.

by Eusebius¹ to have written, in describing his fruitful efforts to obtain authentic information concerning the Lord and his teaching, the following words: 'If I met with anyone who had been a follower of the elders anywhere, I made it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders, what was said by Andrew, Peter or Philip, what by Thomas, James, John, Matthew or any other of the disciples of our Lord, and what is said by Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord.' It is clear that Papias here sets the Presbyter John, mentioned after Aristion, nearly on the same level as that other John whom he places before Matthew; but the context establishes it beyond question that the latter is meant for the son of Zebedee, while the other does not belong to the circle of the Twelve any more than does Aristion. On both Johns are bestowed the honourable titles of 'Disciple of the Lord' and 'Elder,' for both were representatives of the first Christian generation—that of the eye-witnesses. But while the one *had said*, the other was *still saying*, and it is therefore implied that he was alive at the time of Papias's investigations—though whether Papias held any direct intercourse with him is not stated, at any rate in this passage—and since the John mentioned in the midst of none but Apostles can scarcely be any other than the famous Apostle, the son of Zebedee, it is obvious that the surviving John was no Apostle, but merely a 'Presbyter.'

Papias, then, said nothing of any Evangelist John; had he done so, Eusebius would scarcely have kept his knowledge of such a fact to himself, and the recent childish hypothesis that John dictated his Gospel to Papias is hardly worth a mention. But Papias places the son of Zebedee in the majestic list of the Apostles from whose lips he had still been able indirectly to procure utterances; side by side with him, however, another John, who was an Elder too, but also his own contemporary and one of his chief authorities. If the son of Zebedee had lived at Ephesus—that is, in the neighbourhood of Papias—down to the time of Trajan, we should expect that the latter, in his thirst for information, would have made use of him to a very considerable extent;

¹ *Hist. Eccles.* III. xxxix. 4.

indeed scarcely expect any enlightenment on the writer's past, but the silence he maintains as to his real name in the addresses is nevertheless remarkable. On the other hand, in the First Epistle¹ and the Gospel (e.g. i. 14, 'and *we* beheld his glory') the rank of eye-witness is certainly claimed for the writer with regard to the Gospel story. xxi. 24 of the Gospel clearly shows how much importance the writer attached to this ocular testimony, and by the mysterious word *οἶδαμεν* (*we* know) the Evangelist is supplied with authoritative testimony to the truth of his witness, for of course this could only have been said by those who had themselves been eye-witnesses, by the circle of the *Condiscipuli*, of whom later legend tells. But what, then, was the name of this man of trust to whom they gave the task of recording truth so momentous? It was, according to this verse, merely 'the disciple,' and from the context (*οὗτός ἐστιν*) we may read, with verse 20, 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' The same circumlocution is met with elsewhere,² and we may take it for granted that the same man was meant in xviii. 15 fol. by 'another disciple' or 'the other disciple, which was known unto the high priest.' This item, by the way, is of no use to us, since we learn nothing further concerning an acquaintance of the high priest among the band of disciples.

In former times it was believed as a matter of course—on the ground of tradition—that the Beloved Disciple was no other than John the son of Zebedee. Chapter xxi. seems to support this view, since in verse 2 those who took part in the miraculous draught of fishes are named as Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, the *sons of Zebedee* and 'two others of his disciples'; and since nothing is said as to a subsequent change of scene, it is among these that we must look for the Beloved Disciple whom, according to verse 20, Peter, turning about, saw by his side following the Lord. But why should he not just as well have been Nathaniel, or one of the unnamed pair? The sons of Zebedee, who are mentioned nowhere but here throughout the Gospel, while the names of James and John do not appear at all, might be mere padding,

¹ i. 1-4.

² xiii. 23, xix. 26, xx. 2 (here *ἐφίλει* instead of the usual *ἠγάπησεν*).

like the mention of Philip in xiv. 8. If we only knew, at any rate, whether the Beloved Disciple were one of the Twelve! But this is by no means rendered certain by xxi. 2, for Nathaniel and the nameless pair cannot very well be included in the ranks of the Twelve. True, we are expressly told in verse 20 that this disciple was the same as he who had leaned on Jesus' breast at supper and said, 'Lord, who is he that betrayeth thee?' (Cf. xiii. 23: 'There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of his disciples,' and xiii. 25: 'He leaning back, as he was, on Jesus' breast said unto him,' etc.) This supper was the last meal of which, according to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus partook in company with his disciples, and it was also that at which he performed the washing of their feet and finally pointed out Judas as his betrayer. According to the Synoptics,¹ too, none but the Twelve were with him on this occasion, but the Synoptic account is not conclusive for the Fourth Gospel; John, as we know, says not a word of the 'institution of the Last Supper' at that parting ceremony, which to the Synoptics is the point of greatest importance, and what they represent as the Paschal meal is in John merely an ordinary supper. The 'disciples' are indeed present, according to xiii. 5, but it seems scarcely probable that this idea, which occurs with such extraordinary frequency in John, should coincide absolutely with that of the Twelve,² when we remember that after the Risen One had appeared to his disciples in xx. 19 and bestowed the Holy Ghost upon them, we are told that Thomas, one of the Twelve, had not been with the disciples when Jesus came, whereas eight days later he is to be found among them in the same room.³ In the 'High Priestly' prayer of chap. xvii. as well as in the parting discourses, we are left with the impression that 'the disciples' represent the whole body of believers—all those whom God had given to Jesus out of the world⁴ and of whom but *one alone* was lost⁵—a statement which, by the way, we hear with astonishment after reading vi. 66. If, in short, the Fourth Gospel did not contain that saying of Jesus 'Did not I choose you the twelve?'⁶

¹ Mark xiv. 17-25 and parallels.² Except in vi. 67 and 70 fol. and xx. 24.³ xx. 26.⁴ xvii. 6.⁵ xvii. 12.⁶ vi. 70.

we should learn from it nothing whatever of a privileged circle of twelve Apostles. These few verses, then, vi. 67-71, stand as a modest concession to the traditional story; but to the Evangelist himself the title of 'disciple' seemed far more glorious than that of 'one of the twelve,' which he bestows only on the traitor Judas and on the faithless Thomas, while the word *ἀπόστολος* is used but once, and that as a parallel to the word *δοῦλος*. This, indeed, almost has the air of a certain animosity against the Twelve and their special authority, and this impression is further heightened by another consideration.

The Beloved Disciple, who is here professedly the narrator, and whom not even the third person of xix. 35¹ deposes from the rôle of writer to that of authority, regularly appears side by side with Simon Peter, and as regularly eclipses him. In the account of the Last Supper² Simon Peter wishes to know whom Jesus regards as his betrayer; he does not, however, dare to ask the question himself, but makes a sign to the Beloved Disciple, who immediately asks it and receives the desired answer. At Jesus' arrest but two of his disciples follow their Lord, Peter and the nameless one; the latter first procures admittance for Peter into the High Priest's palace by virtue of the consideration in which he is there held, but then, while Peter cowardly denies his Master, the other accompanies him faithfully along the whole of the road to death, he alone stands beneath the Cross, and he it is who is given by the dying Christ to Mary as her son, becoming thereby in the fullest sense the heir of Jesus. Further on,³ again, he and Peter, alone among the disciples, go to the tomb at the bidding of the Magdalene, but he, the 'other,' reaches it before Peter, steps up to the opening and sees the linen cloths lying empty. Upon this Peter enters the tomb itself before him, but this is no proof of greater faith—on the contrary, it is only of the other that we are definitely told 'he saw and believed,' even though he too, as well as Peter, 'as yet knew not the Scripture.' Finally in xxi. 15-23 it is surely not

¹ 'He that hath seen hath borne witness, and he knoweth that he saith true.'

² xiii. 23 etc.

³ xi. 2 etc.

intended to confer on Peter a degree of love to Jesus to which no other had attained, but rather politely to refuse this claim to a *πλέον τούτων*; Peter's very question in verse 21 betrays the fact that he regarded the Beloved Disciple as a rival, and it is also noteworthy that the latter follows Jesus of his own accord, whereas Peter does so only by express command. Lastly, in verses 22 and 23 we are given to understand that a saying became rife among the brethren that the unnamed disciple would not die, for this was thought to have been foretold him by the Risen One as distinctly as had his death upon the cross to Peter; but the writer's faith in this saying had passed away, and he impresses it upon us that Jesus did not say 'he shall not die,' but only 'if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?'

The only touch in the picture of the unknown disciple which is in favour of his identification with the son of Zebedee is the designation 'he who leaned on Jesus' breast,' because this reminds us of Mark x. 37, where the sons of Zebedee ask to be suffered to sit, one on the right hand and one on the left of Jesus in his glory—a request which would certainly lead us to suppose that they were accustomed even in this world to occupy the places of honour at his side. Besides *we* certainly have a feeling that Jesus could not have bestowed special marks of his love and confidence on a disciple whom he did not at the same time admit into the circle of the Twelve, and—which is still more important—of whom the other Gospels know absolutely nothing. As a matter of fact, however, this chosen one, who in his turn stands opposed to the other chosen ones, is a figure which can find no place within the Synoptic tradition: he is, in fact, not a figure of flesh and blood at all. The self-testimony of the Fourth Gospel is bound to arouse the gravest suspicions on account of the airs of mystery and the ambiguity which surround it. If in xix. 35 and xx. 31, the writer addresses himself directly to his readers with the words 'that ye may believe,' why does he keep his own personality—that of speaker or writer as the case may be—so mysteriously veiled? Considering the charges laid upon him and the events in which he had taken part, an 'I' would in truth

have been no less natural than a 'ye' or a 'we.' If a disciple were here setting down some of his recollections of Jesus—no matter from what point of view or after how long an interval—the tone of personal reminiscence would be bound to assert itself more, and it is wholly impossible to conceive why the son of Zebedee or any other John should so anxiously have avoided all plain references to his own personality. On the other hand, the vagueness and mystery of the indications concerning the author, his cautious reserve on one page, followed by the highest claims on another, would become quite intelligible if a later Christian, writing in the name of the true body of disciples, of those blessed ones who 'had not seen, and yet had believed,' had composed a spiritual, an idealist Gospel such as must have been written by a disciple who, leaning as he did upon his Master's breast, had been enabled to gaze into his heart, and was therefore far better qualified to describe his greatness and glory than those who merely reported those things which their bodily eyes had seen.

But it is to be concluded from xxi. 22 fol. that the unknown writer did not create for himself the rôle of an ideal disciple quite independently. It is true that he promises his counterpart a spiritual 'tarrying' till the Parusia of the Lord—that is to say, within the Gospel, which was to win and work till the end of the world—but, on the other hand, he confesses that this personage was mortal, was in fact dead; and why this change if it were not founded on some historical fact? The aged John of Ephesus is the only disciple known to us who lived to such an advanced age that a belief in his immortality might have arisen; it is to him that tradition points; Polycrates claims the Beloved Disciple as a pillar of the Asiatic Church, and therefore his image must surely have hovered before the mind of our Evangelist too, whom it were idle to look for anywhere but in Asia. But was it the son of Zebedee or the Presbyter whom he thus idealised, and in whose name he sought to write? From the investigation conducted above we must conclude that we are not in a position to answer this question, or at most we can but say that he wished to be heard and read, not as the son

of Zebedee nor yet as the Presbyter, but simply as the disciple who had understood Jesus best and loved him most tenderly. And for a true understanding of the Gospel it is a matter of indifference which of the two was the John whom the writer had in his mind, at any rate if we accept it as certain that it is not this John himself who speaks to us in the Gospel, but one of his later adherents.

3. It is, in fact, the one unassailable proposition which criticism, dealing solely with the internal evidence, can set up concerning the Fourth Gospel, that its author was not 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' Those who can ascribe it to this actual John may just as well accept the Second Epistle of Peter as the work of Simon Peter. Nor does the Presbyter hypothesis affect this judgment in the least, for the Presbyter himself would still be a disciple who had leaned on Jesus' breast, who after his Master's death had taken that Master's mother into his own house, and had thus been enabled to obtain detailed information of his early history,—for a mere passing contact with Jesus such as even Aristion could boast (supposing that he was the fabricator of the wretched conclusion to Mark) is not sufficient to infuse historical reality into this figure of the most intimate of the friends of Jesus which pervades the Fourth Gospel. The most intimate must, after all, have been a Hebrew; though that is not inconceivable in the case of the Evangelist, since the Semitic extraction of the writer may be observed both in the language, with its shrinking from the periodic sentence, and also in the forms of thought. For my part, however, I should prefer to look upon our Evangelist as the Christian-born son of Jewish Christian parents, for his attitude towards the Jews is so hostile and aloof that he uses the name no longer in a national sense, but merely to denote the unbelieving adherents of a superseded religion.¹ It is true that, if we substitute for the *quondam* fisherman an otherwise unknown John who, as the friend of Caiaphas, had been in a position to acquire a high training in theology and philosophy, and had been an early convert to the fundamental ideas of Paul, the objections which (considering that in

¹ P. 398.

voluntarily to those who had already been flung to the ground by his mere word. The Jesus of the older Evangelists, who kept silence during the interrogation, is here transformed into the accuser and judge¹; his dealings with Pilate are those of a king with his subordinate, and only in xix. 9 does the prophecy 'he opened not his mouth' obtain a momentary recognition. The words which John puts into the mouth of Jesus on the Cross serve only to waken faith and to convert the Saviour into an emblem of brotherly love; the cry 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' is far more intolerable to John than it had been to Luke.

But the entire framework of the public career of Jesus is different in John from what we find it in the Synoptics. It is not merely that the latter represent Jesus as being crucified on the fifteenth day of the month Nizan, after he has celebrated the Passover with his disciples on the previous day, in accordance with the Law, while, in John, Jesus dies on the fourteenth day of Nizan, before the beginning of the Jewish Passover: it is that the activity of Jesus is transferred in quite overwhelming proportions by John to Judæa and Jerusalem and is distributed over several years, whereas in the Synoptics we are told of but one journey of the Messiah to Jerusalem—that which led him to the fatal Passover. A very remarkable difference also exists between the Synoptics and John with regard to an occurrence which could never have been displaced in the memory of one who had taken part in it. The cleansing of the Temple, that act of Messianic omnipotence, is placed by Mark, Matthew and Luke in the last days before the death of Jesus, and forms the main ground for the action of the authorities against him; John, on the other hand, relates it as early as chapter ii., placing it in the first Easter visit of Jesus to Jerusalem, and in his account the Jews content themselves with asking him for a sign of his authority to do such things. That the statement of John is here the less probable of the two is admitted by almost all who allow any criticism whatever to be applied to his Gospel, so obvious is the connection in this case with the idea that pervades the whole of John,—that the Sonship of Jesus was attested continuously from the very first

¹ xviii. 20, 21, 23.

moment of his appearance in public both by himself and by his disciples and followers, particularly by John the Baptist. According to the Synoptics, on the other hand, the Twelve themselves did not realise whom they had in their midst until comparatively late; this is evidently a fragment of real historical knowledge, and John's is the dogmatic reconstruction. For if in John vi. 68 etc., Peter in the name of the Twelve answers Jesus' question 'Would ye also go away?' with the words—'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God,'—this is an obvious heightening of Mark viii. 29, but it contains nothing new, since as early as i. 49 Nathaniel makes the same acknowledgment. In my opinion the Synoptics are also right as to the day of Jesus' death and as to the duration of his ministry. For to reconstruct, solely on account of the one prophetic utterance 'How many times' etc. of Matthew¹ and Luke,² several visits of Jesus to Jerusalem out of the Synoptics themselves, against their obvious intention, is almost as childish a pastime as that of determining the number of years of the ministry from the parable of the fig-tree in Luke.³ But John had a definite interest in making Jesus appear in Jerusalem several times and for various different feasts; Jerusalem was to him the stage on which Jesus was meant to fight out his battle with the Jews, and this battle must be depicted in more scenes than one. And is it easier to believe the account of the Passion in John, according to which Jesus dies on the fourteenth of the month Nisan, at the very hour at which, as the Law directs, the Paschal Lamb was being prepared for the Passover (a combination of events which was more than welcome to the theology of fulfilment, since it visibly represented Jesus as the Lamb of God) or the report of the Synoptics, in which Jesus is still able to celebrate the Passover with his disciples, and is slain on the day after the Feast, in gross violation of the festal ordinances?

I know of no point, in fact, in which our knowledge of the life of Jesus receives an incontestable increase through the Fourth Gospel. But even if we could value its author more often as a witness of the first rank, it would still be impossible

¹ xxiii. 37.² xiii. 34.³ xiii. 7.

to assume any more than that he made use of certain valuable authorities, and not that he was an eye- and ear-witness. Some critics are inclined to attribute certain definite statements in John, especially those indications of place which have no connection with the writer's general design (*Tendenz*)—such as 'Bethany beyond Jordan' as the scene of John's baptising,¹ or afterwards 'Ænon near to Salim,'² or the mention of Jesus' walking in Solomon's porch³—to the studious researches of the Evangelist. And he may certainly have had some knowledge of Palestine, for the remark about the High Priest 'of that year' in xi. 49, which corresponds so ill with the established custom of the Jews, affords no direct proof to the contrary, since in Asia men would easily become accustomed to such inaccurate phraseology. But the names of persons which are occasionally introduced in order to give animation to the narrative inspire but little confidence, and still less the numerical statements of xxi. 8 or vi. 19 ('when therefore they had rowed about five-and-twenty or thirty furlongs' etc.). If, then, these data have no higher value than, say, the statement of Josephus that Balaam was led by Balak to a mountain sixty furlongs distant from the camp of the Israelites, have we any right to ascribe those other details as to places, feasts and days to anything but the author's literary pleasure in making his representation more detailed?

Unfortunately, the verdict that John, while loosely dependent on the older authorities, created his own materials freely, and derived them from his *faith* rather than from trustworthy sources, is not least true when applied to the discourses of Jesus which fill the greater part of his book.

Not only does his Jesus speak in the language of the Evangelist and pray in the way in which the Evangelist narrates, but what he says has scarcely two or three sentences in common with the Sayings as given in the Synoptics. Instead of the parables of the latter, we have here, at most, colourless allegories and ambiguous metaphors; instead of the pithy practical wisdom of the Synoptics, we find theological speculation; instead of the constant relation to actual circumstances and events, the prevailing character of timeless-

¹ i. 28.² iii. 23.³ x. 23.

ness. All the discourses whose sole theme is in reality the speaker himself must be considered just as unhistorical as the long 'High-Priestly' prayer of chapter xvii., which could scarcely have been uttered in the presence of the disciples and formally recorded by them immediately afterwards. If we leave a few doubtful sayings out of account, the only verse in the Synoptics which recalls the tone of the Johannine discourses is Matt. xi. 27 (repeated in Luke x. 22); and we are thus confronted with the choice of looking for our historically attested materials *either* in John *or* in the Synoptics—but not in both. For a Jesus who preached alternately in the manner of the Sermon on the Mount and of John xiv.-xvi. is a psychological impossibility; the distinction between his so-called exoteric and esoteric teaching a palpable absurdity. The defenders of the 'authenticity' of John do, moreover, as a rule admit that the Evangelist intended to make some sort of idealisation of the sayings of Jesus—that he was in a state of *quasi* ecstasy while writing—in other words, that he gives us a picture of his hero which exceeds the bounds of history. Science, however, cannot allow itself any such mysticism or phrase-making; in the Johannine discourses it is impossible to separate the form from the matter—to ascribe the form to the later writer and the matter to Jesus—no: *sint ut sunt aut non sint!* It is of course perfectly conceivable that as in John xii. 25 a saying of Jesus is corroborated by Synoptic parallels, so there may be certain others not so corroborated which spring from a different but trustworthy tradition (e.g. xiv. 2); in itself, for instance, Jesus might well have bequeathed such a consolation as that of xvi. 21 fol. to his disciples. But the specifically Johannine material, of which chapter xvii. is the type, was produced and created by a single brain, and that the brain of the Evangelist. The party of Apology, moreover, who do their best to disguise this fact by all manner of explanatory hypotheses, defeat their own ends, for in reality they lower Jesus in order to exalt one of his disciples to the skies. Jesus must surely be regarded, to judge from the effects which he has left upon the world's history, and quite apart from the religious aspect of the case, as a

personality which either repelled or else completely subjugated others; but if Jesus' favourite disciple, after he had been withdrawn for many years from all personal intercourse with his master, could record a '*higher* than the merely historical' impression of him: if the Christ who is elevated to the level of the Johannine individuality is more lovable, greater and mightier than the 'strictly historical' Christ of the Synoptics: then Jesus has hitherto been consistently over-rated—then the disciple is above his Lord.

4. If these considerations compel us to deny the Fourth Gospel all independent value as an authority for the history of Jesus, the book acquires an even greater interest as an authority for that of the early Church—in fact, of the Church in general, for it is certainly the original source of that conception of the Saviour to which, in the theology of the Church (not in the feelings of the people), the future was destined. Moreover it teaches us once for all how very far from any real clearness and fixity were the ideas of the early Church concerning Jesus, since it was possible in the second century for John to become a Canonical Gospel side by side with the three Synoptics. The high-handed manner in which the unknown author of John composes discourses and prayers to put into the mouth of Jesus and arranges the course of his activity on earth, might almost destroy our confidence in all tradition concerning Christ, if we did not still feel the contrast very markedly between John and the ephemeral glitter of the multitude of fancy-Gospels (*Phantasieevangelien*) which sprang into existence soon afterwards, and if we did not see that even John respects the fundamental lines of actual history, although, unfortunately, the sayings he records are far from suited to it. The story of the baptism of Jesus, for instance, which must have been particularly inconvenient to our Evangelist, he adapts indeed to his own ends, but without destroying all traces of the Synoptic narrative. He was certainly aware of the striking contrast between his own presentment of the Gospel story and that of the other Evangelists, with whose work, as we know, he was acquainted: he did not feel satisfied with the existing Gospels, and intended partly to improve upon and partly to supersede them. Here the question confronts us:

whence this writer, who could not feel called upon on the ground of eye-witness-ship to charge the older Evangelists with falsification—whence he derived the courage for this bold task, and what it was that actually constrained him to take up his pen. In attempting to answer it we enter upon one of the most obscure passages in the history of the early Church.

The view that 'John' was published as a philosophical prose-poem, by an Asiatic theologian who might just as well have kept his *Messiad* to himself, should certainly be rejected as antiquated and narrow-minded. On the contrary, John is a work begotten by the actual needs of the time. The passionate zeal of the writer is not entirely concealed beneath the monotony of his discourses, and the idea which is so natural to us of the devout John wholly absorbed in the contemplation of his Saviour is in reality most ill-suited to such a man. Baldensperger tries to explain the Gospel as the manifesto of a Christian, writing during the acute stage of the struggle between the followers of Jesus and the Baptist sect, which latter had openly gone back into the camp of unbelieving Judaism. The remarkable interest in John the Baptist shown by our author, his almost importunate eagerness to compare him with Jesus and to emphasise his inferiority (e.g. x. 41: 'John indeed did no sign'), would certainly be explained by this hypothesis, and a flood of light is thereby shed on many a dark word in the Gospel. But in spite of Acts xviii. 24–xix. 7, the Baptist sect remains but a shadow, which it is difficult to imagine as entering upon so severe a contest as Baldensperger must assume, with what was by that time the comparatively old-established Church. And even if we could so think of it, we should still require another factor for the full comprehension of the peculiarities of John, for we can hardly suppose that the farewell discourses are directed against the Baptist and against those who over-rated him. Moreover, the Gospel contains not a single utterance hostile to or even slighting the Baptist; in v. 33 fol., for instance, contempt is poured by Jesus, not upon the Baptist, who had 'borne witness unto the truth,' but upon the Jews, who had sought testimony from a man, whereas Jesus neither asked nor needed any external witness, his works

place in the Jewish propaganda during his time; the only necessary supposition is that the two monotheistic religions, each with its vigorous proselytising tendency, had become definitely separated, and were now openly striving—precisely in the interest of their missionary activities—to dispute one another's claims to precedence. This state of things, however, continued during the whole of the second century. As Justin championed the cause of the Church against Judaism in his Dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, so the Fourth Evangelist wished to champion it in his Gospel—only with still greater effect, because his demonstration was positive, was in the grand style, and was apparently carried out with all the impartiality of the historian.

But with whose authority should he endow his Gospel? His own name, that of a little-known and perhaps comparatively young Christian theologian, would have done more harm than good, and, on the other hand, he would scarcely have dared to issue it expressly under that of another. His source of information must be an eye-witness, and if possible one who by his relation to Jesus possessed the highest qualifications for telling the story of Jesus. Well, he thought he was acquainted with such a man. The man to whom he, as well as the whole Asiatic Church of his time, owed their knowledge of the Lamb of God, of his divine character and of the absolute nature of the redemption he had brought, was the disciple John. John had passed away, even though men had believed he would live to see the return of the Lord, but his witness—his Gospel—lived on in his communities, and assuredly it would be an act of which he would have approved to draw up this witness of his in written form, now, when the need for a convincing word of testimony was so urgently felt. But the writer would have been no true child of his age if in carrying out his plan his attention had always been anxiously fixed in the first instance upon the tradition as delivered by John, instead of upon the needs of the Church. The greater part of the discourses of Jesus, and probably the bold modifications of the Passion story in an equal degree, are his own work. How far there may already have existed in much of this a school tradition on which he worked, we cannot even attempt to ascertain.

but what must have given him an inward confidence in his task was the conviction that he was reproducing the portrait of Christ exactly as he had received it from John. According to the standards of his time, the words 'we know that his witness is true' (xxi. 24) would afford full excuse for the man who, in order to increase the effect of this witness, had shortly before added to the words 'this is the disciple which beareth witness of these things,' which are subjectively true, the objectively questionable exaggeration 'and which wrote these things.'

The connection between the Gospel and the long-lived disciple of Jesus in Asia, of whom we have certain knowledge through Polycarp and Irenæus, is thus established, and where else should we look for this enthusiastic admirer of the disciple who leaned on the breast of the Lord than at Ephesus, the city where that disciple had stood for so many years like a steadfast pillar among his brethren? And in Asia Minor we may discover yet other elements of the Christology and the religious language of which the perfect type is offered by the Fourth Gospel; e.g. in the Apocalypse (see p. 281), in the quotations from the Asiatic Presbyters made by Irenæus, in the writings of Papias (e.g. the passage quoted by Eusebius in the *Hist. Eccles.* III. xxxix. 3: ἐντολὰς . . . ἀπ' αὐτῆς παραγνομένης τῆς ἀληθείας) and of Polycarp.¹ The divine Christ, Christ as the Truth, the Way, the Life, the bread of Life, etc., are not the creations of our Evangelist himself, but were found pre-existing by him as the creations of Johannine thought, and he himself merely erected his own artistic edifice upon the Johannine foundation.

Unfortunately, this John must, notwithstanding, always remain for us a figure wrapped in mystery. He must at any rate have been a determined and successful representative of 'spiritual' (*pneumatische*) Christology, a believer, for whom to have Christ and all the treasures of time and eternity, on the one hand, and, on the other, to have love both to God and to the brethren, were identical conceptions, and moreover so strongly marked a personality, that although he but travelled further along the road

¹ E.g., Philip. iii. 3, vii. 1, ix. 2.

laid down by Paul, the image of Paul was blotted out by him—though all unintentionally—in the Asiatic provinces. The *Epistles* of Paul were still preserved there, but all recollection of the man himself faded away. Was this great man, then, one of the ‘Sons of thunder,’ or a disciple John who did not come into prominence until comparatively late? The title of *πρεσβύτερος* borne by 2. and 3. John merely establishes the identity of the John referred to there with him of xxi. 22 of the Gospel; it is the disciple who dieth not, the Elder among Elders. It is true that the Apocalypse is particularly refractory to the notion of Apostolic authorship, but neither would the Beloved Disciple of the Fourth Gospel have been a suitable author for it, since on that hypothesis we should have expected some reference to the past imperishable relations of the Seer with the Son of God. However cautious we ought to be in demanding a personal element in an Apocalypse, it certainly cannot be considered probable that the Revelation was the work of John, the aged disciple of Asia; at most it, too, can be said to belong to his ‘School,’ even though it may be of earlier date than the Gospel, and may perhaps be more directly dependent on his teaching. When this is said, however, the last reason for preferring the intangible ‘Presbyter’ to the son of Zebedee disappears; the latter might well have given a mighty impulse to the Christianity of Asia in the years between 70 and 100, and have impressed the stamp of his personality upon the Church of that district for many years to come.

Of course, what he evidently prided himself upon most was, not his having once belonged to the circle of the Twelve, but the fact that as *disciple* he had been and still was bound to his Master by special and indissoluble ties of love; thus it was the character of disciple, eye-witness, Beloved of the Lord, which his unknown follower who dared to write the Gospel prized in him more highly than that of Apostle—especially since certain Apostles were not merely alleged by Jewish slanderers, but had proved themselves to be, guilty of treachery, cowardice, lack of understanding and of faith. His aged master, on the other hand, was for him the embodiment of the voice of truth. And when he had designed the

Gospel in a manner he thought worthy of the 'Elder' himself, and when his work earned the approval of those who had often sought in vain for such a weapon during the heat of battle, it became so sacred a task to him and so much his second nature to write in the tone of John, that when Gnosticism, with its errors both of theory and practice, appeared and demanded a speedy and telling refutation, he entered the lists against it in the same character of the aged witness—only, naturally, not with another Gospel, but with an Epistle, the form of literature whose utility for such disputes had been established by Paul. Isolated supplements he furnished in the shape of the two shorter Epistles. The clearer emphasis here laid on the authority by which these writings—appearing, as they probably did, suddenly and mysteriously—claimed attention, as well as the complaints in 2. and 3. of certain open refusals to receive them which had reached the writer's ears, confirm us in the assumption which we must in any case have made, that the Johannine writings were not welcomed with equal enthusiasm by all Christians who were brought into contact with them. Various motives may have combined to produce the objections raised against all or some of them: in the East, for instance, many who had found a lifelong sustenance in Mark or Matthew would have rejected John in the spirit of Luke v. 39.¹ But the new generation—and the young everywhere—accepted it; the self-consciousness of the new religion was more simply and sublimely formulated there than in the older Gospels, and whatever the fascination of the subject left unaccomplished was performed by the renown of the name under which these writings circulated. After the lapse of a few decades the embarrassment into which the Church was brought by the constant appeals of Gnostics, Montanists and Docetists to the authority of John, or the objections which the Quartodecimani were bound to raise against the new date for the Crucifixion, hardly so much as weighed in the scale against the name of John. He was the last survivor of the band of Jesus' personal friends, and therefore the last word was said by 'his' Gospel.

¹ 'And no man having drunk old wine desireth new, for he saith "The old is better."'

CHAPTER II

§ 32. *The Acts of the Apostles*

[Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, vol. iii. (ed. 8, by H. H. Wendt, 1899), and Holtzmann's *Hand-Commentar*, vol. i. (on the Synoptics and Acts, ed. 2, 1892). The most recent revision, by Franz Overbeck in 1870, of W. M. L. de Wette's '*Commentar*' is a work of enduring value. Consult also E. Zeller: '*Die Apostelgeschichte nach ihrem Inhalt und Ursprung kritisch untersucht*' (1854), which is the most notable statement of the Tübingen point of view; E. Lekebusch: '*Die Composition und Entstehung der Apostelgeschichte*' (1854), moderate Apologetics; F. Spitta: '*Die Apostelgeschichte, ihre Quellen und deren geschichtlichen Wert*' (1891); J. Weiss: '*Über die Absicht und den literarischen Charakter der Apostelgeschichte*' (1897), and P. W. Schmiedel's article entitled '*The Acts of the Apostles*' in the '*Encyclopædia Biblica*,' vol. i. pp. 37-57 (1899). For other works see below, par. 6.]

1. After an introduction linking this work with the Gospel of Luke,¹ the first chapter describes how before his Ascension Jesus committed the continuation of his work on earth to the Eleven,² and how these chose a certain Matthias by lot to fill the twelfth place in their ranks in the room of Judas, who had died a horrible death.³ On the day of Pentecost the promise made by Jesus⁴ is fulfilled; the Holy Ghost is bestowed upon the disciples, and the miracle of their speaking with tongues is explained by Peter before the astonished multitudes of pilgrims who come streaming to the Feast from all parts of the earth; three thousand souls are won over to the Gospel, and the believers proceed to live together in an ideal

¹ i. 1-3.² i. 4-14.³ i. 15-26.⁴ i. 8.

community of goods.¹ In chapters iii.-v. we have further proofs of the miraculous power of the new Spirit: a lame man is healed; Peter and John are imprisoned and then set free; Ananias and Sapphira are punished for the deceit they had practised in delivering up their property, the Apostles who had been taken prisoners by the Sadducees are released by an angel; and, after Peter's defence in the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel advises a cautious and temporising treatment of his followers. The next two chapters² tell how seven ministers to the poor were chosen for the community in Jerusalem, and how one of them, Stephen, after rising in a brilliant speech from the position of one accused of blaspheming the Law to that of an accuser of the Jews who disgraced the Law, was stoned to death. But the dispersal of the Christians which follows upon this event brings nothing but good to their cause, for the Gospel now penetrates to Samaria, and reaches a eunuch from distant Ethiopia, while an episode tells of the sorcerer Simon, who wished to buy the gift of conferring the Holy Ghost from the Apostles.³ Next follows a description of the conversion of the persecutor Saul,⁴ after which we hear how Peter journeyed to and fro, now as a miracle-worker in Lydda and Joppa, now as a baptiser of believing Gentiles in the house of the centurion Cornelius at Cæsarea, where, prepared beforehand by visions, he is convinced by actual observation that God did not deny the Holy Ghost even to the uncircumcised.⁵ Next follows a description of the spread of Christianity as far as Antioch, where the name of 'Christian' first appears.⁶ Even the hatred of King Herod Agrippa cannot harm the primitive community, for though James is executed, Peter is miraculously released from prison.⁷ Chaps. xiii. and xiv. tell of the missionary journey of Barnabas and Saul—now re-named Paul—by way of Cyprus to Asia Minor and northwards as far as Iconium, Lystra and Derbe; then follows an account of the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem⁸ at which it is decided that Gentile converts should indeed be required, in

¹ Ch. ii.² vi. a d vii.³ Ch. viii.⁴ ix. 1-30.⁵ ix. 31-xi. 18.⁶ xi. 19-26.

xii. 1-25.

⁸ xv. 1-33.

consideration of the weekly readings from the books of Moses in all synagogues, to abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things strangled and from fornication, but should be absolved from all further bondage to the Law (this the so-called Apostolic Decree). Paul and Barnabas now separate for fresh missionary journeys, the former going overland through Cilicia, Lystra and Iconium to Galatia, Troas and Macedonia.¹ The proceedings at Philippi, where Paul and his companions are scourged and condemned to close imprisonment, but are delivered on the very next day by a miraculous interposition of Providence, and even escorted out of the town with all honour by the magistrates, are next described in detail,² and in chap. xvii. we are told how they travelled on, westwards and southwards, by way of Thessalonica, Berea and Athens—where Paul makes his speech on the Areopagus—to Corinth.³ Returned to Antioch, Paul starts on a fresh expedition and chooses Asia as his field of operations, but after three years' work there he is expelled from Ephesus, never to return, by the tumult raised against him by the silversmith Demetrius. Then follows⁴ an account, very minute in parts, of his journey through Macedonia down to Greece and back, and then along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean to Cæsarea, after which we hear how he arrived in Jerusalem, then of the rising stirred up against him by the Jews, of his transportation to Cæsarea, where he is kept in prison for two years until Festus succeeds to the procuratorship, and of the various speeches he makes in his defence.⁵ The last two chapters tell of his removal to Rome and of his discussions with the heads of the Jewish community there, and the document ends with the statement that he was suffered to preach the Gospel there for two whole years, 'none forbidding him.'

We must not expect to find any subtly considered scheme in this book, which merely narrates certain events in the order of their succession, but it is nevertheless possible to distinguish two parts, the first consisting of chaps. i.-xii., in which Peter stands at the centre of affairs and is, as it were, the leader of

¹ xv. 35-xvi. 11.² xvi. 12-40.³ Chs. xviii. and xix.⁴ xx. 1-xxi. 14.⁵ xxi. 15-xxvi. 32.

the forward movement, and the second of chapters xiii.-xxviii., in which this rôle is transferred to Paul. In other words, the first contains the history of the primitive community and of the Palestinian mission; the second, that of the spreading of the Gospel among the Gentiles to the very ends of the earth, from Antioch to Rome. But in the central portion, between chapters viii. and xv., these two divisions frequently overlap; the account of the Council of Jerusalem, for instance, in xv., belongs by right to the first part, and that of the conversion of Paul,¹ together with viii. 3 and xi. 25, more correctly to the second; it can, however, have been no part of the writer's purpose to impose this dualism upon his readers' consciousness.

2. By the dedication to Theophilus² and the express reference to a former work dealing with Jesus, as well as by the assumption of Jerusalem as the place of the Ascension (which agrees ill with the accounts in Mark, Matthew and John), the Book of Acts gives us to understand that it is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke. Moreover, we have no cause to consider the indications of the prologue to be a mere fabrication, for in language, taste, religious views (e.g. the exaltation of poverty and the high value set on fasting) and descriptive colour the two books agree almost more closely than we could have any right to expect, considering their very different subjects and the abundant use by both of very different materials. Their similarity in bulk would also seem to have been part of the intention of the writer. J.H. Scholten's theory (put forward in 1873) that though the writer of Acts, like the writer of Luke, belonged to the Pauline school, yet the two cannot have been identical, because the former is favourably inclined towards Jewish Christianity, while the latter is opposed to it, rests on an insufficient foundation; nor are certain more recent hypotheses, according to which the Acts passed through the hands of a later reviser, who is to be clearly distinguished from the author (here the author both of Acts and Luke), deserving of any higher consideration. Slight contradictions in terms are not sufficient to justify us in bestowing three authors upon the Acts—a Judaist, an anti-

¹ ix. 1-30.

² See Luke i. 3.

Judaist and a neutral—for the Gospel can also display similar incongruities. It is true that the question as to whether this *one* writer had intended from the beginning to follow up his Gospel by a second book must remain unanswered. The prologue of Luke does not indicate it clearly and appears to belong solely to the Gospel, while the ending is complete in itself and needs no supplement. And since the picture of the Ascension is certainly far more highly coloured in the 1st chapter of Acts than in Luke xxiv., the conclusion may be permitted that the two books were not written at one sitting; and the Acts are also made into an independent work by the catalogue of the Apostles, which is here inserted¹ regardless of its duplicate in Luke.²

3. The Book of Acts was probably written a few years later than Luke, i.e. somewhere between the years 100 and 105. It is true that it contains no direct references to events of the Post-Apostolic period, in consequence of which some have ventured to date the book as early as the lifetime of Paul, of whose death we are not told. This is, however, rendered impossible by the fact that the latter is represented in chapter xx.³ as bidding farewell *for ever* to the elders of the church at Ephesus, while the execution of Paul is left unmentioned at the end for other reasons than that of its not having taken place at the time those verses were written.⁴ The decisive argument is that the book stands no nearer to the events related in it than does the Gospel to its own subject: in both the story is told from written authorities; the full observation of the eye-witness makes itself felt partially, wherever these authorities permit; but side by side with it, and not always in the earlier chapters only, we come upon the nebulous conceptions of a later generation. The idealisation here made of the Apostolic Age is not the work of an enthusiastic, uncritical contemporary; it is far too systematic for that, and the knowledge which the writer still possesses of that age is significantly meagre. If the Acts were written by a friend of Paul during Paul's actual lifetime, the writer would incur the sharpest criticism, for he must in that

¹ i. 13.² vi. 14-16.³ 4-38, and cf. xxi. 4, 11-14.⁴ See pp. 43, 44.

have written the history of his own times not only with a partisan and arbitrary spirit, but actually with the greatest carelessness; he must have passed over important facts in silence concerning which a single question would have brought him information. In reality the impression he gives throughout is rather that of the industrious collector, hampered by insufficient material, but desiring to tell his story impartially. And a motive for the composition of such an Apostolic history in the years 63 or 64, when Peter, Paul and John were still alive and expected to see the return of Jesus with bodily eyes, is only discoverable in those whose lack of judgment is as complete as that of the writer, which desires to find room for the first sketch of a Gospel in the very lifetime of Jesus.

On the contrary, the plan of the Acts as well as the manner of its execution point to a time when the first Christian generation had already died away. The writer knows only of organised communities: as Jerusalem has its Presbyters,¹ so Antiochia Paul and Barnabas are obliged to choose Presbyters for every community²; the Apostles consecrate the ministering brethren chosen by the community by a laying on of hands³ a sacrament which forms so important a condition of the reception of the Holy Ghost, even in the case of baptised Gentiles,⁴ that after his conversion Paul is compensated for his absence by a special mission entrusted by Christ in a way to the disciple Ananias.⁵ A similar equivalent, though in a different form, is granted to the centurion Cornelius.⁶ It is more especially in chapter xv. that the Apostles appear as the true leaders of the Church, not only empowered but bound to provide it with laws. Unconsciously, in fact, the picture of the Apostles given in the Acts reminds us of that in the Pastoral Epistles. Under all these circumstances it is impossible that the author should have been Luke the companion of Paul, as the tradition would have it; gaps in his knowledge which meant nothing in the case of the Gospel were irreconcilable with the idea that the book is from the pen of an Apostle's disciple, even granted that he might have

i. 30.

² xiv. 23.

³ vi. 6.

iii. 17 fol.

⁴ ix. 10-18.

⁵ x. 44-46.

lived long enough to write his book at the very end of the first century. But are we to assume that none but greybeards with failing memories were proper authors for the books of the New Testament? On the other hand, we cannot place the Acts later than the beginning of the second century, because no traces of Gnostic seducers as yet appear within the writer's horizon, or at any rate give him any uneasiness, and still less is the state of nervousness to be observed in it into which the Church must have fallen in consequence of a long-continued period of persecution. It is true that this is no proof that the writer beheld all the communities around him enjoying undisturbed tranquillity; on the contrary, they needed encouragement, and this an account of the Acts of the Apostles was peculiarly well fitted to give. Such a situation agrees admirably with the time of unrest ushered in by the persecution of Domitian. We will not introduce into our discussion on the date of the book the much-debated question as to whether our author was acquainted with Josephus, and especially as to whether he had read the latter's 'Jewish War' and 'Archæologia' or not; Acts v. 36 fol. certainly bears a strong resemblance to XX. v. 1 fol. of the 'Archæologia,' and if 'Luke' had reasons for hoping that he would find something useful for his own purposes in the books of Josephus, he would certainly have procured them without delay and have retained some fragments of them in his memory. At any rate, 'Luke' certainly did not serve as Josephus's authority. He was at most a Christian contemporary of the historian. Nor is there any evidence of the existence of the Acts before the second century, and the first traces of it are very uncertain, so that with the above assignment we have taken into account all indications which can help us to form an opinion of its date.

4. The question of its purpose is, however, of still greater importance. We should do well, if we do not wish to follow a wrong course from the very outset in seeking for the motive which underlies the Acts (*Tendenz*), to keep its close connection with the Gospel clearly before our eyes. If they really stand to one another in the relation of Books I. and II. of a larger work, it is unlikely that Book II. will serve entirely different interests from Book I. Now, the writer of

Luke did not write solely in order to satisfy the thirst of his contemporaries and of posterity for information as to a particular field of history; he wrote to satisfy his own faith, and to increase the convincing power of that faith, convinced himself that this could best be done by making as accurate and complete a description as possible of what had actually occurred. We did not observe any partisan purpose in the Gospel, either in the Pauline direction or in that of endeavouring to reconcile the Pauline and Jewish Christian factions; and this alone makes us somewhat suspicious of the party objects which the Acts are said to have served, no matter whether the book is regarded as a defence of Paul and of his Apostolic rights, or as the programme of the party of union,—a document whose object was to wipe out the memory of the differences between Peter and Paul. And when we find that this school of critics (*Tendenz-Kritiker*) can with equal ease regard Paul as approximated to Peter and Peter made to show Pauline characteristics, our impression is confirmed that the writer is wrongly credited with *intentions* where in reality all is explained by ignorance, by the incompleteness of his materials, and by his incapacity to carry himself back into the modes of thought even of a just-departed age. It is true that in the Acts the parallelism between Paul and Peter, the representative of Jewish Christianity, is very far-reaching alike in words, deeds and fortunes: both, for instance, are dreaded by evil spirits, both have to contend with sorcerers, both raise the dead, both are imprisoned and miraculously released, and in their missionary practice as well as in the substance of their preaching they are in complete accord. Even after xxi. 24 Paul walks 'in obedience to the Law,' while even before Paul's first mission to the Gentiles Peter had recognised in the case of the centurion Cornelius the right of the uncircumcised to the Gospel and to the possession of the Spirit, and had unhesitatingly drawn the logical consequences of such a view.

Some of these 'parallelisms,' however, are undoubtedly founded on fact, while those of the discourses and of the religious points of view represented in them are merely due

to the fact that 'Luke' himself composed the declarations or discourses in question and put his own thoughts into the mouths of both Apostles; Paul was not Judaised nor Peter Paulinised, but both Paul and Peter were 'Lucanised,' i.e. Catholicised, and any further coincidences may be explained by the fact that the writer possessed but one scheme for the manifestation of Apostolic power, but one Apostolic ideal, in accordance with which he portrayed both Paul and Peter alike. The similarity in the lives of the two is also far from complete, nor is there the slightest reference to anything of the sort; the many sufferings of Paul enumerated in 2. Corinthians¹—e.g. the 'perils of rivers' and 'perils of robbers' and the three 'beatings with rods'—are omitted by the Acts not because the writer could not discover any parallels to them in the lives of the members of the primitive community, but because in his time nothing was remembered as to these experiences. We should do the writer of Acts an injustice if, instead of recognising his simple pleasure in telling a story, we continually scented some hidden motive not only where he probably added something quite freely to the tradition, but even where he merely reproduced the tradition or where he omitted certain events of which we know from other sources. Certainly the writer meant to be more than a mere critical historian of the Church or its missions, more than the biographer of two Apostles. The title of his book, (αἱ) πράξεις (τῶν) ἀποστόλων (probably not from his hand), is indeed to some extent misleading, since it is but few Apostles of whom the writer has anything to tell but their names,² but its meaning is right nevertheless: he wishes to bring before us the second period of the history of salvation and of the Gospel (as in the Gospel he had described the first and fundamental epoch), a period in which the Apostles, the fully authorised representatives of Jesus, stepped into the place of their acting and teaching master. Here, as in the Gospel, the result expected from the narrative is that the divine nature of the story should be self-attested; every unprejudiced reader was to say to himself that it was solely through the power of the Holy Ghost³ that the Apostles

¹ xi. 23 fol.² i. 13.³ i. 8.

had been able to perform such marvels as he read of in those twenty-eight chapters. The most striking proof of this power in the writer's eyes was, of course, the extraordinary spread of the mission, and it is no mere chance that he breaks off at Paul's unhindered two years' preaching in Rome, because therein is fulfilled the programme of i. 8: that the Apostles should be the witnesses of Jesus 'in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.' Nevertheless we must not label the Acts 'A History of the Extension of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome,' because the interest of the book is not confined merely to that extension, and because such a work would then have required the supplement of a third volume describing the history of the missions beyond the Euphrates, on the one hand, and beyond Rome on the other, whereas the writer himself clearly looked upon his bipartite work as finished (xxviii. 31). What he intended to write was a *History of the Power of God in the Apostles*. He looks upon the Apostles as representing a religious *potency* as necessary as Jesus himself, and therefore their 'Acts' deserved a place next to those of the Saviour. But it was only because of their peculiar power that they stood so high: anything in their lives which was not a manifestation of that power is not recorded; we are told nothing of their early history, nothing of their death, unless indeed, as in the case of James,¹ a miraculous interposition of the divine power was connected with it. It is not because he knew nothing of it that the writer omits to describe the deaths of Peter and of Paul, but because he could not, as in the case of Christ, describe their subsequent resurrection, and because the delight felt by later generations in the details of martyrdom, as such, was to him unknown.

If, then, the sole purpose (*Tendenz*) which the history of the Apostles was meant to serve was that of teaching mankind to realise the triumphant advance of the cause of God through the Apostles, we have no right whatever to be surprised at finding certain considerable gaps in the report, for what was alien to that purpose would naturally be passed over in

¹ xii. 1 etc.

silence. The Acts would have said nothing, for instance, even if their writer had been fully acquainted with the events, as to the dispute between Peter and Paul at Antioch described in Galatians,¹ or as to the terrible war which Paul had been obliged to wage against the 'false brethren' in Jerusalem, and afterwards in so many of his own communities. In the light in which this book desires the Apostolic Age to be regarded, the proceedings at the Council of Jerusalem must necessarily wear a somewhat different aspect from that which they receive in the Epistle to the Galatians.³ As the writer meant his readers to look upon the Apostolic Age, so he himself had looked upon it all his life. His primary object was, not to mediate between Paul, the founder of the free Gentile Christianity, and the rigidly Catholic Gentile Christianity of about 100; rather he had assumed in all simplicity that in questions of salvation all the Apostles had been quite clear and wholly at one among themselves, and that their faith differed in nothing from the faith by which he had himself received salvation in the Church of his time. For his public, he certainly did not aim at any one class: not *only*, that is, at a particular party in the Church whose antipathies against some other he wished to heal, even though he was glad to be able to point to the friendly co-operation between Paul and the community of Jerusalem, since the need of preaching unity was not wanting in his own time; not *only*, either, at unconverted Gentiles or Jews, before whom he, as a skilful advocate, sought to defend the Christian religion, as the legitimate heiress of the Old Testament revelation, against Jewish calumnies and Jewish ill-will towards apostates; nor, finally, at the officials of the Roman State *alone*, though he may have wished to convince them of the political harmlessness of the disciples of Jesus, as of men who had never provoked popular tumults, and one of whom, Paul, had by the verdict of the most competent authorities, the Roman Procurator Festus,⁴ as well as the Jewish King Herod Agrippa,⁵ committed no crime and deserved

¹ ii. 11 etc.² ii. 4.³ Ch. ii.⁴ xxv. 25.⁵ xxvi. 32.

at Berea, again at Corinth,¹ but this is in direct contradiction to the account given by Paul himself in 1. Thessalonians.² Finally, we are told in Acts that Paul always sought out the Synagogue first in his missionary journeys and did not feel justified in devoting himself to the Gentiles until his own compatriots had rejected the Crucified Messiah,—an inconceivable principle of action for Paul, who had so clearly recognised in Galatians³ that the task laid upon him by God was that of working among the Gentiles.⁴

On the other hand, large sections, especially in the second part,⁵ are distinguished by the greatest clearness and knowledge of their subject; nor need the outline of Paul's life after the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem, more particularly the order in which he visited his mission-stations, and, on the whole, the occasional time-indications, be mistrusted by the critic. And for the first part, too, we need not only point to certain quite unimpeachable statements like that of the execution of James,⁶ but especially to the fact that the writer confines himself remarkably closely to information concerning the life of Peter (and even in his case only as far as the year 52 or thereabouts), which is certainly the best proof that he knew practically nothing about the other Primitive Apostles, but also, on the other hand, that he did not seek to cover his ignorance by bold fabrications. We might in truth speak of the modest reserve of such a writer, when we compare his work with the romances which, in the guise of more complete Histories of the Apostles, afterwards became such popular and such dangerous reading.

Probably every reader acquainted with Thucydides and Livy will agree that the numerous speeches which 'Luke' puts into the mouth of his heroes, the most elaborate of which he gives to Stephen,⁷ but others in like manner to Peter, and, on several very various occasions, to Paul, are in a greater or less degree his own free inventions. (Here, however, we must except the 'philologist' Blass, who goes so far as to refer the

¹ xvii. 14 fol. and xviii. 5.

² iii. 1 fol.

³ ii. 8 fol.

⁴ See above, pp. 36, 37.

⁵ E.g., the voyage of Paul from Cæsarea to Puteoli and his arrival in Rome, xxvii. 1-xxviii. 16.

⁶ xii. 2.

⁷ vii. 2-53.

ἰσασιν of Acts xxvi. 4 to Paul himself [instead of the οἰδᾶσιν generally used in the New Testament], on the ground that he wished to show so distinguished an auditor as King Herod Agrippa that he knew how to conjugate his Attic Greek correctly!) That these discourses (including the counsel of Gamaliel,¹ the letter of the chief captain Lysias to the Procurator at Cæsarea,² the letter of the Apostles³ and the speeches of Festus to Agrippa at Paul's trial⁴) are the creations of the writer, is distinctly seen on examining the very first of them, in which Peter tells the brethren at Jerusalem in full detail a story of Judas which had long been known to them, but which the writer now wishes to impart to his readers. In it Peter, the Jew, is actually made to say to other Jews at Jerusalem, 'And it became known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem, insomuch that *in their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, The field of blood,*' while farther on⁵ the same Peter is made to say to his fellow-believers at Jerusalem, 'The Lord hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.' In most of these discourses, such as that speech of Paul's on the Areopagus⁶ which is so much admired by Curtius, or in that of Stephen, there is much that might well have been said by the speaker in the situation described, and the discourses of Peter also have a more Judaistic or Old Testament ring than those of Paul, but this only proves that the writer possessed good taste and a certain amount of historical feeling, just as he represents Paul as speaking differently according to circumstances—as striking an entirely different note, for instance, in his farewell speech to the Ephesian Presbyters⁷ from that in his missionary address to the Athenians.⁸ The 'authenticity,' in the modern sense, of these discourses is impossible first, because the Paul reflected therein has no more in common with the Paul whose thoughts and expressions have become familiar to us through so many Epistles than any other believer might have had, while the Stephen they portray takes up, even before Paul has become a Christian, ~~the~~

¹ v. 35-39.² xxiii. 26-30.³ xv. 23-25.⁴ xxv. 14-27.⁵ xii. 11.⁶ xvii. 22-31.⁷ xx. 18 etc.⁸ xvii. 22 etc.

position which is only conceivable as the hard-won result of Paul's lifelong labours; secondly, because the personality of the writer of Luke and the Acts, as well as his peculiarities of language, are most conspicuously seen in these discourses; thirdly, because it is impossible to understand how such skilfully composed orations could have been committed to posterity, since no one thought of making an immediate record of them, and at Athens no other Christian was even present, besides the speaker,—still less, of course, during the conversations between the captive Paul and Felix, Herod, or Festus; and, lastly, because until the contrary is proved, the same judgment must be pronounced upon the discourses in the Acts as upon all other discourses woven by ancient historiographers into their narratives (those sayings of Jesus plainly compiled by the Synoptics out of isolated sentences and fragments of speeches of course excepted), namely, that it was the object of the historian to make his principal personages express their own characters and that of their time in a rhetorical work of art.

On the other hand, a most satisfactory proportion of the actual events related in the Acts is derived from older sources. The most important of these, the We-document—so-called because it is written in the first person plural—must come directly from the hand of a travelling companion of Paul's, who from time to time recorded in the rich colours of actual experience, and most probably in the form of a diary, the events in which he himself had taken part. We find this 'we' in the accounts of the journeys from Troas to Philippi,¹ from Philippi to Miletus (for the last time),² from Miletus to Jerusalem³ and from Cæsarea to Rome,⁴ and since its statements are never open to the slightest objection, the idea of looking upon the 'we' as a deliberately deceptive fiction of the writer's is one of unusual grotesqueness. On the other hand, the attempt to identify the writer of the Acts with the writer of the We-document is hardly less audacious, in spite of its venerable age; the terse, matter-of-fact tone of the 'we' passages, as well as their familiarity with the actual

¹ xvi. 10-17.² xx. 5-15.³ xxi. 1-18.⁴ xxvii. 1-xxviii. 16.

course of events, forms an overwhelming contrast to the broad, reflective manner and the artificial constructions of the other portions; just as clearly, for instance, as the first half of chapter xxviii.¹ proclaims itself the narrative of an eye-witness, so is the last half (the conversation of Paul with the heads of the Jewish community in Rome²) seen to be a fabrication, introduced by one who was completely foreign to the state of things in Rome at that time, in order to show that, in Rome as elsewhere and always, the Apostle did not turn to the Gentiles until his preaching had been roughly rejected by the Jews. The undeniable carelessness implied in taking over from a foreign source a 'We' which certainly did not signify the writer, is not greater than that ascribed to him by the opposite party, according to whose theories Luke, now drawing from his own fresh recollection and now making use of older memoranda, suddenly begins to address his readers in the first person, without either having introduced the 'We' or explained to whom it referred, and then as suddenly lets it drop again. If the writer of the Acts—and of Luke as well—was indeed the celebrated friend of Paul, he must have written much that was against his own better knowledge (e.g. chapter xv.) ; we shall appreciate him more highly if we finally renounce the search for his name.

The We-document must of course have originally contained more than the four sections mentioned above. It would not have maintained its existence from generation to generation if it had consisted merely of three or four pages of a traveller's journal. It must certainly have been a more or less connected whole, rich in information concerning Paul and his friends, and therefore profoundly welcome to every historian of the Apostolic Age. In some passages the writer of Acts simply incorporated it whole for convenience' sake—not, we may suppose, in servile dependence on its letter, but rather with additions of all kinds, such as the reference in xxi. 8 to vi. 3 and 5. Elsewhere he made excerpts from it, using it as the groundwork for his own more highly coloured pictures. Perhaps he owes to it all the really valuable material for the history of Paul that he produces,

¹ Vv. 1-16.² Vv. 17-28.

especially if xi. 23 already belongs to it.¹ If, as tradition says of the writer of Acts, the author of the earlier document was a Christian of Antioch, this would explain why in dealing with the history of Paul, the Acts do not appear to attain firm ground until his labours at Antioch come to be narrated. Unfortunately, it is impossible to decide the old controversy as to which of the companions of Paul was its author—the claims of Silas, Timothy, Titus and Luke have all been urged. Those who are impressed by the fact that the ‘We’ breaks off at xvi. 17 in Philippi, only to reappear in the same town a few years later,² are perhaps justified in giving their imagination free play and assigning the preference to the physician Luke, who may then have practised in Philippi during the interval, Silas and Timothy having left Philippi along with Paul. But it is only if we regard the whole book as the work of the ‘We’ writer that the fact that Silas and Timothy are spoken of in the third person in xvii. 15, while Titus and Luke are never mentioned at all, becomes an argument against the authorship of either of the two former; a later writer making use of the We-document would have had no reason for suppressing the name of his authority, unless indeed he wished to be mistaken for him; but do we observe any traces of such a desire in the Acts? In my opinion, the continuous silence maintained by the writer of Acts concerning Luke is, if anything, unfavourable to the hypothesis of Lucan authorship; but, on the other hand, the persistent association of his name with the Gospel and the Acts seems to point towards the explanation that the We-document was his work. The recollection that it was precisely Luke among all Paul’s friends who had taken valuable notes of their journeys might have subsisted as late as the second century; what more natural, then, than to ascribe the whole anonymous work, in which one of Paul’s companions certainly did appear in parts as the speaker, to this same Luke? Small weight will be laid on the discovery that the Acts and even the Gospel in certain parts, but most of all the ‘We’ passages, are remarkably rich in medical terms, and thus betray the authorship of Luke the physician, when we

¹ See below, par. 6.

² xx. 5 fol.

recognise how insignificant are those terms: we might as well say that Paul was a gynæcologist on the ground of 1. Thessalonians v. 3! But if we were right in deriving the name of Matthew as applied to the First Gospel from a document utilised therein, we shall be able with the same measure of probability to deduce the name of Luke as applied to the Third Gospel and the Acts from the most important single document made use of by the author of that double work.

The unknown writer of the Acts, however, would not have confined himself here any more than in the Gospel to one authority—in this case the We-document. It is true that he omitted to make any systematic use of the Epistles of Paul; such a possibility probably never occurred to him. But it is unquestionable that he drew part of the information given in the earlier half concerning the primitive community from other sources. He was not the man to invent the names of the seven ministers to the poor¹ and of the two candidates for the Apostleship, Barsabbas and Matthias,² or the positive items of fact concerning Joseph, surnamed Barnabas³; such things invariably point to the existence of earlier written authorities. Imperfect mastery of the available materials would also be the best explanation for certain numerous faults of composition, such as the remarkable duplicate afforded by iv. 32 fol. and v. 12–16 beside ii. 42–47, in which the same general description of the state of things in the community of Jerusalem had already been given. I think it unlikely, too, if only from what we know of his usual practice throughout the Gospel, that he should simply have spun the miracle stories of chapters ii.–xii. out of his own imagination; they are not mere reproductions of Gospel material, and the names of places and persons which they contain seem to favour the assumption that a kernel of truth, overgrown with legendary exaggerations, is to be found in them. Their circulation by word of mouth for a considerable time would easily account for this process, but in my opinion it is scarcely possible that our author was the first in every case to commit these fragments of tradition to writing. The one-sidedness, or rather incompleteness, of his story in chapters i.–xii. is more

¹ vi. 5.² i. 23.³ iv. 36 fol.

avourable to the theory that he was dependent on inadequate written authorities, than to that of his having made a bad selection from a stream of oral tradition still steadily flowing in full creative force.

It is accordingly very natural that many attempts have been made by scientific theologians to unravel the original documents employed in the Acts in as complete a form as possible. But no satisfactory results have yet been attained. Hippita's hypothesis is original and at first sight seductive: an attempt to point out the traces of two parallel histories of the apostles from xxiv. 44 of Luke down to the last verse of the Acts, so that the writer of Acts would in reality have had no more to do than to add and piece together different portions of these narratives. The weak side of this theory seems to be that everything good and authentic is heaped together into the one authority (A), and everything incredible and unimportant into the other (B). Moreover, much is assigned to B which to all appearances is the peculiar property of the author of the present book of Acts. The assumption that the first half of the Acts is based on several written predecessors finds greater favour even with strictly conservative critics: 'Acts' of Philip, Peter, Stephen and Barnabas have all been mentioned, and even the *Κήρυγμα* of Peter has been added to the list, while Blass is willing to allow that Hebrew or Aramaic documents were made use of by Luke in these first twelve chapters. As a natural reaction against the subjectivism of such theory-mongering, others, among whom is H. Wendt, prefer to extend the one well-authenticated authority in the second part to greater and greater dimensions, until at last it contains materials for almost every portion of the Acts. Not only is it made to form the basis of chapter xiii., to contain the great speeches of Paul at Athens, at Miletus and before Agrippa, but it is even said that the story of Stephen, connected with xiii. 1 through viii. 1, 4 and xi. 19 fol. and 27 fol., was taken from it; while as introduction to this, again, certain passages out of chapters ii.-v. are required, describing the ideal state of things in the early days of the primitive community. Wendt himself is distinguished by a cautious reserve in the matter of reconstruction, but he

surely cannot be on the right track in viewing the We-document as he does. He contends that it consisted not only of the writer's memoirs concerning his own actual experiences, but was *in nuce* a history of Paul and of the Mission to the Gentiles. But if it embraced so many points of view and inserted such long—and of course fictitious—speeches of the Apostle, it becomes an *alter ego* of our own Acts, and I see no further reason for refusing to ascribe the whole book to the writer of the We-document. The more closely we assimilate the supposed original document (or documents) to the present Acts of the Apostles, in bulk, composition and purpose, the more thoroughly do we undermine the foundations of the true critical position: the book can only be understood, from an historical point of view, as a new phenomenon in Christian literature; it loses all meaning if it had a number of precursors, possibly out of different camps. The unknown writer certainly utilised earlier documents—as many of them as he could by any means lay hold of—and very probably one in which Jerusalemic material preponderated as well as the journal originating in the Pauline circle. But he subordinated these materials to his own language and ideas with far greater freedom than in the Gospel—except where it suited him to be a copyist pure and simple; he shows himself indeed more than a mere editor of the Acts; had he been nothing more, his work in that capacity would have been so brilliant and so skilful that it would be impossible to believe him satisfied with such a part.

We will refrain, therefore, from pursuing a shadow, and will let the reconstruction of the sources of the Acts alone until we light upon some parallel work of the earliest times which will enable us to apply synoptic criticism in this case also. We should rather congratulate ourselves that the author of Acts followed any older documents at all in telling the story of the first thirty years of the Church. Above all, we must not forget that what we now possess is his own work, not that of his authorities; he adopted the material which he found already existing in oral or written tradition, but moulded it according to his own ideas of edification and truth. His ideas, however, were identical with those of the average Christianity

of his time, except that in him they were ennobled by higher culture and a more loving study of the sacred story; in the Acts, therefore, we may say that the Gentile Church of the beginning of the second century codified the best of what she knew concerning the first period of her history. We cannot over-estimate the value of a book to which, perhaps, we do not exactly owe our comprehension of the Apostolic Age, but to which we are very largely indebted for our ability to use the oldest documents, the Epistles of Paul, towards such a comprehension. From the æsthetic point of view the Acts also deserve high praise; they have the same true-hearted warmth, the same smooth, agreeable, conversational tone and the same tactful abstinence from crude effects as the Gospel: they are, in fact, the ideal of an ecclesiastical history.

6. The philologist Blass believes himself to have set the entire criticism of the Acts upon a new foundation. The fact that its text has come down to us in two very different recensions was indeed not unknown before his day, but not enough was made of it. Besides the text given in most of the Greek manuscripts and used as the foundation-stone of the Acts in all critical editions of the New Testament, there exists another, represented by the Græco-Latin Codex D,¹ by a Syriac and an Egyptian translation² and by a series of Old-Latin quotations. This text could not have arisen out of mere false readings, copyists' errors and other accidental corruptions, but when compared with the accepted text presents an appearance of individuality and in many places even of greater antiquity. As early as 1848 F. A. Bornemann pointed out the superiority of this Western text over the Eastern (for convenience' sake we may call them β and α respectively) and looked upon α as the work of Alexandrian Revisers. Blass³ also recognises two different recensions, but since these are remarkably alike in style, he ascribes both β and α to the same writer—that is, to the author of Acts—and considers that in β we have his sketch or first draught, while α represents the terser, clearer and more carefully written fair copy. In 1895 Blass published

¹ See § 52, par. 2.

² See § 53, par. 3 c.

³ First in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* for 1894, pp. 86-119.

a 'Philological Edition' of the Acts of the Apostles, equipped with introduction, critical apparatus, running commentary and exhaustive indices, but based only on the α text; this was, however, followed in 1896 by a similar edition of β : 'Acta Apostolorum secundum formam quae videtur romanam.' The flights of literary and historical fancy with which Blass adorned his hypothesis in the complacent prefaces to these editions—his picture of the eagerness of the humble Luke to present his *opus* to the distinguished Asiatic Theophilus in as polished a Greek as possible, and of the pressure of the Roman Christians to be allowed to use at least the sketch, since a second example of this fair copy was not so easily obtainable—all this threatened to divert attention from the main fact, that of the existence of two recensions of the text, which it is the lasting merit of Blass to have pointed out. Both merit and danger were increased, however, when Blass affirmed¹ that the same state of things also existed in the case of the Gospel of Luke. He was not disconcerted by the fact that here the Western text, or β , is the more concise and displays signs of greater care in the removal of difficulties of form and matter; here, too, he considers that α and β stand to one another in the relation of sketch to fair copy, except that this time β represents the latter. Blass has a neat historical explanation of this fact: his view is that when Luke came to Rome with the captive Paul, he brought with him his Gospel—which he had written and published in Palestine between the years 54 and 56—and presented his Roman brethren with a copy of it—not, however, without polishing the text, and, more especially, adding certain things to it which he had preferred to suppress in Palestine and Syria out of consideration for the Jews. Then in Rome he proceeded to write his second great work, the Acts, between 57 and 59; of this—as was only fair!—the Romans kept the first draught, while Luke prepared an improved edition for Theophilus and the Christians of the East.

Of course, no one is justified in assigning the Acts or Luke to a date some twenty to forty years earlier, simply because a second

¹ See his edition of Luke 'secundum formam quae videtur romanam,' published in 1897.

recension of their texts is brought to light; the considerations brought forward above in support of their later date retain their full value notwithstanding both Blass and Savonarola. We have in any case admitted that one reporter was an eye-witness, and not even Blass's hypothesis can take us any further. The only questions open to discussion are those as to whether both recensions of both books are really from the hand of the same author, and, if so, which is the earlier version in each case. The enthusiastic approval with which Blass was greeted in the case of the Acts was naturally not repeated in that of the Gospel; men like Zahn and Vogel, who are inclined to accept the view that Luke himself produced two editions of the Acts, find it impossible to admit that the author of the Gospel made a revised version of the latter work, but consider that the insertion of numerous glosses is sufficient explanation. Hilgenfeld, again, in his '*Acta Apostolorum graece et latine secundum antiquissimos testes*' (1899), while giving the preference with almost greater obstinacy than Blass to the β text, does not regard α as a second and improved version from the hand of the same author, but returns on that question to the point of view of Bornemann. On the other hand, the priority of α even in the case of the Acts has been energetically affirmed by Corssen, Ramsay, B. Weiss in his '*Der Codex D in der Apostelgeschichte*' (1897) and Adolf Harnack in his brilliant investigations¹ into the original text of the Apostolic Decree (Acts xv. 28 fol.), of Acts xi. 27 fol. and of Acts xviii. 1-27. Many others consider that the original text of Acts is to be found neither in α nor β , but lies between or behind them, so that we should be obliged to ascertain the true reading separately in each case of doubt by a careful selection from both the existing versions, neither of which has come down to us intact. The ideas of A. Pott²—who, however, again tries to combine questions of literary with those of textual criticism—are particularly ingenious; he considers that the valuable variants supplied by β were taken from the We-document, the true *Acta Pauli*. This, he believes,

¹ *Sitzungsberichte der königl. preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaft*, 1899, pp. 150 fol. and 316 fol., and 1900, pp. 2 fol.

² *Der Abendländische Text der Apostelgesch. und die Wir-Quelle* (1900).

continued to exist for a time even after it had been incorporated in parts into our Acts; a few copies of α were corrected by the light of it, at first in the form of marginal notes, and these again gave rise to the earliest versions of β . And in effect there are certain insertions in β , such as that of Myra as a stopping-place after Patara,¹ or the words 'we stayed in Trogilia' between the departure from Samos and the arrival at Miletus,² or the detail mentioned in verse xxviii. 16, 'the centurion delivered the prisoners to the stratopedarch,' which sound as though they were based on good authority. But Pott's hypothesis is wrecked once for all by the fact that these peculiarities of β extend over the whole of the book, not even omitting the discourses: thus in iii. 3 we have in β 'and he cast his eyes upwards and saw' as against the 'who, seeing' etc. of α ; in v. 35 the words 'and he spake to the rulers and them that sat by' instead of the mere 'and he said unto them' of α ; in xii. 10 the additional words 'and went down the seven steps' beside the 'and passed on through one street' of α , and finally in xxiii. 29 the sentence 'When I found that this man was accused about nought but certain matters of the law of Moses and about one Jesus, but had done nothing worthy of death, I released him with difficulty by force,' in the letter of Lysias, instead of the shorter version of α , 'whom I found to be accused about questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.' If the extra matter in β were derived from the We-document, the latter must have been as long as the Acts themselves (see par. 5), and, moreover, how are we to explain the omissions from α which are also to be observed in β ? Besides this, however, Harnack has proved beyond dispute that β is a later recension of α dating from the years between 100 and 140; when Gamaliel prophesies in β : 'ye will not be able to overthrow them, *neither ye nor emperors nor tyrants*,' while in α the italicised words are absent,⁴ it is clear that the writer is there drawing upon his experiences in the period of State persecution. So too, when he converts the

¹ Verse xxi. 1.² xx. 15.³ E.g., xxvii. 11 and large parts of verses 12 and 13 as well as of ix. 12.⁴ v. 39.

Apostolic Decree from a compromise in matters of ceremonial into a code of morals—omitting the prohibition of ‘things strangled,’ turning the clause enjoining abstention from blood into a commandment to do no murder, and supplying a new fourth clause in the sentence ‘Whatsoever ye would not that men should do unto you, do not ye unto others’—then we may know that we have the words of a man of the second century at earliest before us. But, on the other hand, we may not descend any later because by the year 200 we find his text already dominant in the West.

A few of the peculiar readings of β certainly deserve to be given the preference over the universally accepted versions of α , but the great majority of them are the work of an emendator of the Acts, who again had his own imitators, for the very readings of β are not all from the same hand. This man’s chief desire was to attain a certain ideal of clear consistency in the narrative by inserting colourless connecting links between the sentences, but also to force a stronger impression upon his readers by adding certain amplificatory, broadening, sometimes even vulgarising, touches of detail, while occasionally he even altered from the mere joy of altering, the mere necessity of doing something. Passages like xix. 14 are characteristic of his manner; here the β text has: ‘And among these the sons of a certain ruler named Sceva wished to do these things, men who were reputed to be exorcists of such persons. And when they were entered in unto the man with the evil spirit they began to utter the Name and said, We command thee by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth, to go out of him.’ This is four times as long as the version of α , but where does it betray the slightest independent information over and above that of α ?

Finally, since the Codex D and all the manuscripts based upon it possess a text which differs with remarkable frequency from the oldest Greek versions, even in the case of the Gospels—and not only that of Luke—and since it must be admitted that in this instance also its tendency is to give an artificially natural appearance to the text, by simplifying and smoothing it down in accordance with later taste, it cannot be of any use to us in deciding questions of Introduction in the

case of the narrative books of the New Testament. Apart from the few good readings which, in spite of its corruptions, it has preserved, the one thing it teaches us beyond any doubt is that at the time this recension was made the sacred texts were not yet regarded with any very great respect; any scribe who could express them in better, clearer, more concise or more emphatic language did so without hesitation. The sayings of Jesus remained comparatively immune from attack, but less compunction was already shown towards the discourses of the Apostles in the Acts, while the parts which suffered most from such arbitrary treatment were those proceeding from the Evangelist himself, the narrative framework. But it is not to be wondered at that the reviser sometimes made use of the very language and ways of putting things of the writer whom he was victimising; the author of Luke treated his authorities in the same way, perhaps with full intention.

The hypotheses of Blass are indeed of no importance for the history of the origin of the Lucan writings, but shed much light upon that of their subsequent propagation, nor is Blass without some merit as a commentator; while as an historian he may be particularly proud of having shattered our confidence in the 'tradition' on a few important points—unwittingly, it may be, but still most thoroughly.

§ 33. *Retrospective Survey of the Twenty-seven Books of the New Testament*

Everyone possessed of any religious sense must feel how much is common to all the twenty-seven books of the New Testament; but, on the other hand, this relatively small domain presents us with the greatest contrasts that it is possible to conceive. The latest of its documents are separated from the earliest by a full century; the years between 50 and 70 may have witnessed the appearance of the ten Pauline Epistles, as well as of the We-document, the Logia of Matthew and the original source of the Apocalypse,

those between 70 and 100 that of the three Synoptics, Hebrews, the Apocalypse and probably, also, though only by a narrow margin, Acts and 1. Peter. Then in the beginning of the second century come the Gospel and the three Epistles of John, Jude a little later, the Pastoral Epistles probably after 125, and James and 2. Peter last of all. In bulk too, how complete is the gradation from 2. John, with its twenty-five lines or so, to Luke, more than a hundred times as long! The Epistle to Philemon is a private letter, written to an individual and intended but for a single reading, and 1. Thessalonians is the unpretending address of a pastor to his distant flock; but opposed to these we have the Apocalypse with its threats against any hearer who should injure the sacred revelation by additions or suppressions,¹ and 2. Peter with its artificial means of assuring itself universal and obedient recognition. Comparison is scarcely possible between the Greek of the Apocalypse and that of Hebrews, and still less so between the mental atmospheres which surround the two. It would be impossible for two branches of literature to be more opposed to one another than those represented by the genuine Pauline Epistles and the Acts, or the Gospel of Mark and the Apocalypse. It was not so easy as we, after two thousand years of growing use, are wont to imagine, to regard the story of Jesus as told by Mark and Luke as authentic, and yet to display the same respect for a work whose claims were so wholly different as those of John. Finally, however, the mental endowments, and especially the literary capacity, of the writers with whom we are here dealing are enormously varied in degree; the well-meaning bluntness of Jude, for instance, is almost unendurable beside the profundity of Paul. And yet the Church was insensible to all these contrasts and actually put together the twenty-seven works in question, written as they were by at least twelve different authors, into one book, and treated it, moreover, from beginning to end as a single entity. The indifference of the Primitive Church as to the forms in which she possessed and handed down her most sacred writings (for none of her members intended to exercise any creative faculty

¹ xxii. 18 and 19.

in this respect, or to introduce a new *genre* into literature) certainly assisted such a process; nevertheless, considering the immense amount of difficulties to be overcome, it was accomplished in a marvellously short time. It will now be our task to ascertain the guiding forces behind this process, the actual motives which led to the collection and canonisation of the twenty-seven Books of the New Testament.

PART II

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

[Cf. J. Kirchhofer, 'Quellensammlung zur Gesch. des N. T.lichen Canons bis auf Hieronymus' (1844): still useful as a collection of authorities, though the author's notes are worthless. A convenient arrangement of documents for the early history of the Canon in Preuschen, 'Analecta,' 1893, pp. 129-141. C. A. Credner, 'Gesch. des N. T.lichen Kanons,' edited by Volkmar (1860): displays the faults rather than the merits of the earlier theologians, who have done much good work for the science of the Canon. Introduction. F. Overbeck, 'Zur Gesch. des Kanons,' 1880: happily only two fragments of a history of the Canon, combining the most perfect mastery of material and method with the greatest possible freedom from prejudice. P. W. Schmiedel in Ersch und Gruber's 'Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften, etc.' Sect. ii. vol. 32 (1822), pp. 309-337: an admirably clear and instructive outline, the details of which were carried out in C. Weizsäcker's *Kanzlerreden* of Nov. 6, 1892, 3-16. T. Zahn aims at giving a comprehensive presentation of the subject in his 'Geschichte des N. T.lichen Kanons,' in 3 vols. At present there have appeared vol. i. (968 pp.), 1881-89 (the New Testament before Origen) and vol. ii. (1022 pp.), 1890-92 (the earliest authorities and the evidence required for the Canon of the 1st and 3rd vols.); vol. iii. will give the history of the New Testament Canon from the time of Origen. We must add to these the 4th vol. of his 'Forschungen zur Geschichte des N. T.lichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur,' which began to appear in 1881, and of which only the fourth (1891) and fifth (1893) contain, besides special researches by Zahn, similar work by J. Haussleiter and others. Zahn's work has great merits: the supplementary material is especially useful; but the history of the New Testament before Origen is almost a piece of special pleading, an attempt, by the use of Hofmann's methods of exegesis and criticism, to overturn

the best-established results of former research, in the supposed interests of Christianity, and to maintain that in the third generation after Christ (c. 100) the principal parts at least of the New Testament were already 'an actively working authority recognised as binding in all parts of the Church.' The most emphatic contradiction was given to Zahn by A. Harnack in his pamphlet, 'Das neue Testament um das Jahr 200' (1889)—an effective grouping of the counter arguments. Harnack's 'Dogmengeschichte,' 1888, vol. i., contains a complete statement of his view of the case. A. Loisy's 'Histoire du Canon du N.T.' (1894, 305 pp.) is written with much lucidity, in the spirit of R. Simon, and in spite of all its dependence on Zahn, avoids the intrusiveness and ambiguity of the latter's apologetic tone; but in the 1st and 3rd Parts the Catholic Doctor of Theology in him too often stifles the learned historian: see, for instance, p. 18, note 1: 'Je suppose que le Clément dont parle Hermas est le célèbre évêque de Rome, et que le livre du Pasteur s'est répandu dans les communautés chrétiennes avec son approbation.' B. F. Westcott's 'A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament' (ed. 6, 1889) is, in spite of its apologetic tendencies, a work of sterling value, and well qualified as an introduction to the study of the material.]

CHAPTER I

THE PRE-CANONICAL PERIOD OF NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE

§ 34. *The Canonical Authorities of the Apostolic Age*

1. From its very birth, Christianity was a book-religion. Nor is this statement of Holtzmann's in any wise upset by the solemn contradiction of B. Weiss: 'Thank God, that is not the case.' The assertion that 'Christianity was Life from the beginning, and because this Life pulsates in its records, they cannot be interpreted and understood on the theory of the indebtedness of the one to the other,' constitutes no antithesis to the assertion that it is a book-religion. This means, in scientific language, that the Christian religion—and none but the Christian during its actual rise—possessed from the first a Divine Book; a Canon of

absolute sanctity; for without this fact the history of the New Testament Canon would be incomprehensible. It was not only when the Books of the New Testament were written, or when they were gradually collected and read aloud in public, that a Canon first made its appearance among the Christians. Jesus himself possessed a Bible, as did all the Jews of his time, and his Apostles and followers throughout the world. It is immaterial whether the names 'Canon,' 'Bible,' 'Old Testament,' were in existence at that time or not; it is equally unimportant whether the Bible at that time was composed of exactly the same Books as those included in the Old Testament of to-day; but at any rate at the birth of Christianity there had existed from time immemorial in the consciousness of every Israelite—whether of 'the Dispersion' or of the Holy Land—a number of writings carrying the highest authority, which were read aloud to the communities on the Sabbath in portions of some length, and were by this means universally known. These writings contained the infallible Revelation of God to His people, the form in which, even after the extinction of Prophecy, He Himself had remained, as it were, personally in their midst; they were held sacred as the source of all knowledge concerning the Divine Truth and the Divine Will, and as an absolute standard for every member of His people.

This group of writings, the most precious inheritance of a greater age, had been brought together gradually. We can still clearly distinguish three strata: (1) the Law, (2) the Prophets (*nebiim*) and (3) the Scriptures (Hagiographa) or the 'other books of our fathers' which are mentioned in the prologue to the Greek Ecclesiasticus (132 B.C.) immediately after the Law and the Prophets.

When, as often occurs in the New Testament, and even in the mouth of Jesus in Matt. xxii. 40, the Book of the Revelation of God is described as 'The [whole] Law and the Prophets,' this must be taken as a designation *a parte potiori*, for no one believes that Jesus had any idea of excluding the Psalms or Job. (Cf. Luke xxiv. 44, 'the law of Moses, and prophets, and psalms': here again only the principal part, the crown of these extra 'Scriptures,' is named.)

More briefly still, it was possible to speak simply of 'the Law,'¹ even as including the other sacred documents also. The simplest name is that most generally adopted—'The Scriptures.' The addition 'Holy' is rare,² for this was not required in the mental intercourse of one believer with another. The singular, 'The Scripture,' is often applied to a part, or even a single passage in 'the Scriptures,' but it may also serve to designate the whole, and this was the more acceptable as it emphasised the unity of that complex collection of writings. It is used above all in those places where the written revelation of God is personified, as in the phrase 'the Scripture foretold it' and 'the Scripture hath shut up all things under sin.'³

Now the position adopted by Jesus with regard to this Scripture did not differ from that of his Jewish contemporaries. It is perfectly fitting that Luke⁴ should make him start from a passage of the Scripture in his first great sermon at Nazareth—standing up to read as reverently as any other man, and sitting down again before he begins to preach. And as he began his task of teaching, so, after his resurrection,⁵ he ended it by initiating his disciples into the meaning of the Scriptures, thus preventing any idea of discrepancy between what was there foretold, and what was now fulfilled. Even if his acknowledgment of every jot and tittle of the law⁶ be not genuine, it is at least indisputable that he had no desire whatever to criticise the sacred things of his people. Even with the forcible words '*But I say unto you,*'⁷ in antithesis to 'Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time,' he does not intend to discredit or to undervalue this 'saying' of former days.

For our part, we may recognise in this impressive sign of a self-confidence not to be misled by the mere letter, however sacred, the sublimity of the New Religion as compared with the Old—the irreconcilable contradiction between letter and spirit;—but in the consciousness of Jesus himself there

¹ Rom. iii. 19.² Rom. i. 2; 2. Tim. iii. 15.³ Mark xv. 28; John vii. 38-42; Rom. iv. 3; 1. Tim. v. 18; James ii. 23; Gal. iii. 8 and 22.⁴ Luke iv. 16 fol.⁵ Luke xxiv. 44-47.⁶ Matt. v. 17-19.⁷ Matt. v. 21-48.

was no other desire than that of setting forth the whole deep meaning and the ultimate purpose of the commandments of God, in opposition to a conception of that commandment which was merely temporary, superficial and external. Jesus was by nature too unfettered, too creative, to make use of Old Testament words as much as Paul. But though as a fact he repeatedly set the Law at naught (e.g. Mark vii. 1-23 and x. 1-12) with all the authority of one who has come to end it, he never had the intention of quitting the basis of the Old Testament. In principle his point of view towards the Scripture was the same as that of every Pharisee.

2. Nothing was further from the mind of Jesus than the idea of enlarging or of duplicating these Holy Scriptures; he neither wrote anything himself, nor bequeathed any such task to his disciples. Nor is it mere chance that later ages, fruitful as they were in the formation of legend, never ventured to credit Jesus with the command to prepare those fictitious Scriptures which were composed under the name of every possible Apostle. When he called his disciples, he bade them work, like himself, by word of mouth, and the greater number of them have left not a single line behind; some were probably ignorant of the art of writing. They had the Scriptures, they had the Christ, whose speedy return they confidently expected; and even if the practical tasks of the moment had left them time for authorship, there are yet no grounds for supposing that they had any intention of writing, far less of writing books which should rank with the Law and the Prophets. Paul himself had no idea of creating a new sacred literature; his writings were all occasional; in his Epistles he merely endeavoured to supply for the moment the lack of his own personal presence on certain definite occasions. It did not occur to him to demand that they should be treasured as long as the world endured, that they should be dispersed through the rest of Christendom, read aloud in the public worship of other communities—perhaps even of those of which he knew nothing—or placed in the same rank as the Prophets and the Psalms. In Col. iv. 16 he desires the church to exchange the letter written to it for that which he had sent to the neighbouring church of Laodicea. This exhortation shows

that such a forwarding of Paul's letters was not a matter of course, and even here it is only enjoined to a strictly limited extent. This Epistle to Laodicea, several to the Corinthians, and probably many more of which no trace remains, disappeared early: an inconceivable occurrence if the recipients had thought that they held Canonical writings in their possession.

The Apostle certainly did bring a Canon to the heathen he had won; but it was no other than that which he himself had brought with him from Judaism. 'The Scriptures' were undoubtedly read aloud in the Pauline churches as they were in the Jewish Christian, and among the Jews; for the Apostle always takes for granted a considerable acquaintance with the Old Testament: he draws from it innumerable arguments for his demonstrations,¹ which are as binding in his readers' eyes as in his own. Beyond these he knows no other written authorities. It is true that in 1. Cor. ii. 9, words are quoted prefaced by 'As it is written,' and in Eph. v. 14 by 'Wherefore he saith' (that is, in the Scriptures), which we do not now find in the Old Testament, but we learn from the Fathers that such passages are drawn from the Jewish Apocrypha (the Apocalypse of Elias and others), which, in the condition of the Jewish Canon at that time, the Apostle might have treated as the Word of God no less than the 'Wisdom of Solomon.' And if by the 'Scriptures of the Prophets'² through which the great mystery had been made known unto all nations, Paul meant the Apostolic writings, including the Epistle to the Romans, none of his readers would have understood him, precisely because of that addition 'of the Prophets.' He never quotes from any other Epistle of his, nor takes for granted that they were known to any but those to whom they were addressed; and as little did he appeal to the written teachings of any fellow-Apostle. His letters reveal a strong self-confidence; he wishes that his warnings and exhortations shall have a lasting effect; what he writes is truth, and in 1. Cor., after strictly distinguishing³ between a precept that emanates from himself and one laid

¹ In Romans alone sixteen times καθὼς γέγραπται or γέγραπ. γάρ.

² Rom. xvi. 26.

³ 1. Cor. vii. 10, 12.

down by the Lord, and after clearly characterising the proposed solution of moral problems as a simple *opinion* of his own (*γνώμη, νομίζω*) he closes the discussion¹ with the forcible expression 'And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.' But even such assertions as that put forward in vii. 25 in support of his opinion, 'I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be a believer' [*πιστός* elsewhere means no more than 'trustworthy'], show plainly that he does not claim an extraordinary authority for his Epistles. In his estimation they rank no higher than any oral declaration; the Spirit of God to which he appeals, belonged to all Christians alike²: it was no exclusive possession of his or at best of twelve other Apostles. It is true that the *Charismata*, the Gifts of Grace, in which this possession of the Spirit appeared and was effectual, were bestowed in manifold degrees, and Paul certainly did not undervalue his Apostolic, his Evangelistic *charisma*; but although he very carefully classifies the gifts of grace,³ he nowhere makes mention of any *charisma* of authorship, and even if he had, the words of the thirteenth chapter of 1. Corinthians, 'For now we know in part,' would still hold good.

In short, Paul demands from those churches to which he had given the Gospel—even the words 'all the churches' of 1. Cor. vii. 17 should be limited in this way—a pious reception of, and obedience to, his exhortations, because with them he feels himself as a father among his children.⁴ But he never thought of making similar demands upon strange churches (that of Jerusalem, for instance) and, conversely, he repelled such claims made by strange Apostles in his own Church. He has no knowledge whatever of the 'Choir of the Apostles' as a new point of unity for the whole 'Universal Church,' as a supreme and infallible court for all. We must presume the same standpoint for the Primitive Apostles; in the face of Gal. i. 2 and Acts xxi. 17-26, it would be worse than childish to believe that Christians in the Holy Land or elsewhere accepted Paul's Epistles as Divine writings.

But what if the Apocalypse belongs to the Apostolic Age?

¹ 1. Cor. vii. 40.

² Rom. xii. 1. Cor. xii.-xiv.

³ Rom. viii. 14 fol.

⁴ Gal. iv. 19; 1. Cor. iv. 15.

That would make no change in our conclusions. It is certainly written in a solemn and lofty style; its author threatens¹ with eternal ruin anyone who should add to or take away from 'the words of the book of this prophecy.' Once and again he apostrophises his 'hearers,'² showing that he expected not only to be read, but to be read in public. But he shares this expectation with the authors of every Jewish Apocalypse; for since the Apocalyptic seer renounces the personal, oral effectiveness of the prophet, he can only gain the desired influence on wider circles by finding readers for his 'Scripture' in private and in public. Now herein, as he knows by experience, lay that danger of falsification or mutilation which he endeavours to avert by his threats. He wishes not to be rated specially high as a writer, but as a prophet whom God had permitted to look into great mysteries (cf. p. 279). He has to deliver a special Revelation of God to his servants,³ and the word of God⁴ is the substance of his testimony. Therefore he demands for it the same reverent acknowledgement as each of the hundred prophets of Corinth demanded for their discourses, or as Paul demanded for his own utterances—unless indeed it be suggested that the falsification of his Epistles would have been indifferent to him. But he can scarcely have thought of the addition of his book to the 'Scriptures,' in any case not more than did the authors, say, of the Apocalypses of Enoch or of Ezra. Hermas (a simple Roman Christian of about 135) is no less concerned in later times as to the diffusion of his Revelation of the 'Shepherd'; he even asserts that he had received instructions from heaven as to the means he should take to make known his book to 'all the Chosen'; nevertheless, he did not consider his visions, exhortations, and parables as 'Holy Scripture' in the same sense as Isaiah and the Psalms. The writers of Revelations and Hermas strive their utmost to secure the desired influence over their contemporaries; their concern is for practical success, not for their meed of honour. The idea of placing new Canonical books side by side with those which had been handed down from former ages, was absolutely out of

¹ Rev. xxii. 18.² Rev. i. 3, xxii. 18.³ Rev. i. 1.⁴ Rev. i. 2.

keeping with the Apostolic times; the wealth of living Canonical material—the multitude of prophets, of speakers with tongues, of teachers, which was to be found in every community, did not permit the consciousness to arise of any need for a new Holy Scripture, to act, as it were, beside the great prophetic Books of the past as the glad interpreter of prophecy fulfilled. The creation of a Canon is always the business of poorer times that wish to secure something at least from the riches of earlier days, and to compensate themselves for the scantiness of their possessions by exalting their dignity to the highest possible degree.

3. And yet there existed even in the oldest Christian communities an authority beside the Law and the Prophets—nay, placed unconsciously high above them—an authority the recognition of which was the distinctive mark of separation from the unbelievers who revered only the Law and the Prophets. This new ‘Canon’ was Jesus Christ.

John¹ was not the first to place the words of Jesus simply on a level with the words of God, or to allot to the Comforter the task of bringing all that Jesus had said to the remembrance of the disciples. Paul himself looked upon that which he had received from ‘the Lord’² as belonging to the things beyond which there was no appeal. He is glad to be able to settle a doubt concerning the resurrection ‘by the word of the Lord’³; still more characteristic is 1. Cor. vii. 10, where an ordinance is issued with the words ‘not I, but the Lord’; that point being thereby settled at once. In vv. 12 fol. he brings forward his personal opinion, and this requires a detailed argument; in ver. 25 he states regretfully that ‘concerning virgins he has no commandment of the Lord,’ and so can only give his own judgment. Again, in 1. Cor. ix. 14: ‘Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel’—a contravention of this commandment on the part of believers being as little to be thought of as a contradiction of the sacred words of Deut. xxv. 4,⁴ mentioned in ix. 9. Some such words of Jesus must certainly have formed part of the fixed substance of Paul’s preaching of the New Life, and if his account⁵ of the

¹ xiv. 1, 9, 10, 21, 24, 26.

² 1. Cor. xi. 23, xv. 1 fol.

³ 1. Thess. iv. 15.

⁴ Cf. Acts xx. 35.

⁵ 1. Cor. xi. 24 fol.

inauguration of the Last Supper, especially in the introductory formula, sounds as if he were dealing with expressions which had long been fixed and settled, this does not indicate that he is here quoting a written record, but is explained most simply by the fact that Paul had already told this story times without number, and so had unconsciously given it a stereotyped form—depending, as I think, upon the first impressive report of it which had been given to him in Jerusalem. In any case the words of Jesus (unhappily so few) which are found in Paul's letters, are, for him, sacred and absolutely binding, not because they were *written* in any sacred book, but because he was convinced that they were the genuine words of Jesus. He never quotes such words with any of the forms he uses when appealing to the 'Scripture': it is purely arbitrary to attribute to Jesus the words of 1. Cor. ii. 9 fol., and of Eph. v. 14¹; and there is no trace of Paul's having used any primitive Gospel, or, in fact, any written information whatever concerning Jesus. *The (old) Scripture and the Lord*: these were for Paul as well as for all Christians of his time the infallible sources of knowledge. Yet this contained the germ of a new Scripture. If later ages would not see their Lord pass utterly from among them, they could only hold him fast by setting his words on record; and these records of him could not fail at last to occupy wholly the place which had been his.

§ 35. *The Canonical Authorities of Christendom*
from c. 70 to c. 140

[Almost the only authorities, besides the New Testament, are the *Apostolic Fathers*, and the *Teaching of the Apostles* ('Didaché'). The best editions of the *Apostolic Fathers* are: 'Patrum Apost. Opera recensa,' by O. von Gebhardt, A. Harnack, and T. Zahn (3 volume edition with commentary, 1876-77; *editio minor*, containing the text only, price 3 marks, 1900), and F. X. Funk's 'Opera Patrum Apost.' vols. i. and ii. 1887-91. For the text and a most thorough discussion of the 'Didaché,' see Harnack, in the 'Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte d. altchristl. Literatur,' ii. 1, 2, 1886.]

¹ See above, p. 464.

1. A large part of the New Testament writings is the work of the two generations after the death of all the Apostles. On one point there is no change from the earlier position: not one of these unknown authors intended to write a Canonical Scripture. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has certain readers in view whom he knows personally. This is not so with most of the Catholic Epistles. The authors of these address their utterance to the whole body of believers; yet this implies no more than that the Epistle was beginning to become a form of literature. The authors of the Epistles ascribed to James and Peter stand on the same footing as the authors of the Gospels and the Acts; they wish to serve all their fellow-believers, each with his particular gift; but not one of them is conscious of a special inspiration which sheds the glamour of divinity around his book. Following his own unconstrained choice (*ἔδοξε καὶ μοι . . . γράψαι*), Luke, in his Gospel, 'traces the course of all things accurately from the first,'¹ he only proposes to essay the same work more skilfully than the 'many' who 'have taken in hand to draw up a narrative;' not to do it under entirely different conditions. John also contains a confession of imperfection in xx. 30 fol. (cf. xxi. 25); the author breaks off at this point, not because God's assistance had failed him, but because he is moved by entirely human considerations of what is appropriate and fitting. If these writings had not come down to us as parts of the New Testament, no one would be aware from any self-consciousness on the part of the authors, that there was any difference between these books and other uncanonical productions of the Christian literature of those times.

2. On the other hand, Paul and these later writers, to whatever section of the Church they belong, are at one in making 'The Scriptures and the Lord' the foundation of belief and life. 2. Timothy iii. 16 speaks of the Scripture delivered by God (*γραφὴ θεόπνευστος*) and extols the blessing to be found in a careful study of it. Here the word 'Scripture,' no less certainly than in 2. Peter i. 20 fol., means the ancient Holy Scripture given by God to Israel.

¹ Luke i. 1-4.

Christians with Hellenic culture considered it indispensable to steep themselves in the thoughts of Jewish men of God ; almost all Christian authors of the first century show themselves remarkably familiar with the Old Testament, although in truth their comprehension of it was not always made easy by the universally received Greek translation of the 'Seventy' (i.e. the Septuagint). A new Scripture science arises : the art of interpreting the 'Scriptures' in a Christian sense, and of drawing from them authority for each idea and each precept of the new religion. When Polycarp in his letter to the Philippians (xii. 1) confidently expresses the hope that his readers are well versed in the Holy Scriptures, he has this science in mind, and the Gentile Christians in Corinth or Rome were probably as well acquainted with the Old Testament as was the average Jew. But for Christians the 'commandment of the Lord and Saviour' (*ἡ ἐντολὴ τοῦ κυρίου*) took its place beside 'the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets,'¹ while as regards the employment of these words for purposes of teaching or admonition, there is an unmistakable advance from Paul to the writers of the two following generations—the Apostolic Fathers, the authors of the 1st Epistle of Clement and the Epistle of Barnabas, Ignatius, Hermas, even the authors of the 'Didaché' (c. 130), and of 2. Peter and James. Not in vain, not without response to a need universally felt, did the 'many' mentioned by Luke² strive to keep the tradition of eye-witnesses concerning the Bringer of the Gospel from perishing, and to shape it into a clear and complete historical narrative. In these words of the Lord the Church found her most direct edification, her most infallible guide. Naturally, the farther we go from the Primitive Church, the more complete is the knowledge of the sayings of Jesus obtained from written sources : that is to say, it is drawn from the historical works of the 'many,' but there is still a distinction made between the fountain head and the waters which flow from it ; a word is not sacred because it stands in one or another Gospel, but because it comes from the mouth of Jesus, or teaches us to know Jesus, or spreads the faith of Christ. The Gospels were

¹ 2. Peter iii. 2.² Luke i. 1.

treasured as a substitute for oral instruction, just as a church would treasure a letter of its Apostle as a substitute for his personal exhortation, for the time unattainable. They were not considered as records of revelation, and their authors were not looked on as prophets, men impelled by the Holy Ghost, working with the peculiar help of God and under his special supervision, but as trustworthy fellow-believers bearing witness to the Gospel. The freedom with which any Gospel material is quoted—and how many words of Jesus, since lost, must then have been in circulation!—is in characteristic contrast to the growing accuracy in Old Testament quotations. No question as yet exists of ranking the ‘Gospels,’ all or any of them, with the Holy Scriptures.

In the so-called Epistle of Barnabas (about 125 A.D.) a saying of Jesus, elsewhere unattested, is introduced with the form *φησὶν*,¹ which the author uses elsewhere for the words of Scripture,² but Jesus had been named in the foregoing clause, and it is the most natural course to take him simply as the subject of this ‘he says.’ But Barnabas³ certainly introduces the sentence ‘Many are called but few chosen’ by the words ‘as it is written,’ and according to Matthew xxii. 14, this saying came from the mouth of Jesus. But the conclusion that Barnabas looked upon our First Gospel as ‘Scripture’ would be premature, considering how much evidence there is against it. The saying, which does not bear a specifically Christian stamp, may very well come from some Old Testament Apocryphon, as does that of 1. Cor. ii. 9, unless indeed the author’s memory has failed him, as sometimes happens to greater men than Barnabas. The first who undoubtedly designates as ‘Scripture’ a collection of the Lord’s Sayings—of what collection he was speaking, or whether of any particular one, cannot be determined—and consciously places their authority beside that of the ancient Scriptures, is the writer of a homily which has received the misleading name of the Second Epistle of Clement. He is evidently not accustomed to distinguish the God who speaks in the Old Testament from the ‘Lord’

¹ vii. 11.

² E.g., vii. 7.

³ iv. 14.

of the Christians (e.g., iii. 5, λέγει δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ Ἑσχαίῳ, i.e. the same Redeemer who speaks in Matt. x. 32), and after he has quoted a sentence of Isaiah in ii. 1-3 and explained it in detail, he passes on in § iv. to Matt. ix. 13, 'I came not, etc.,' with the formula 'and again another Scripture saith' (ἐτέρα γραφή). If this is read with vi. 8, for instance, 'But the Scripture says also in Ezekiel,' it is impossible not to recognise the fact that here the utterances of the Christian spirit have received a part in the lofty position claimed for the old records of Revelation. But the unknown preacher certainly belongs to a time which is beyond the limits set here (perhaps c. 145), and he has nothing whatever to do with Clement the Apostolic Father, who died about the year 97.

3. Yet the Canon of the two generations of Christians which followed Paul was certainly somewhat more extensive than his had been. Not only did men feel sure of 'the Scripture and the Lord,' they possessed besides—so the foundations broadened—a third authority in *the Apostles*. Paul had already found the Apostles enjoying the highest consideration in the Primitive Community.¹ In Galatians ii. he speaks of them as 'they who were of repute,'² and he thinks it of the highest importance to be placed on an equality with them, even in 1. Cor. xv. 9; nor is it by chance that he lays such stress on the ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ beside the Παῦλος in the superscriptions to his letters. That he uses this word also in a wider sense only shows that the name was associated with the specific idea of a messenger, an envoy; Gal. ii. 7 and 8 show most clearly that the ἀπόστολοι κατ' ἐξοχήν were those whom *the Lord* had appointed, and to whom the greatest charge, the Gospel, had been entrusted. To reject them meant to reject the Lord; to contradict them was to contradict the Gospel; they were the authentic interpreters of the perfect Revelation of God in Christ. This conclusion necessarily followed from the premises recognised even by Paul, but he did not draw it himself, because he was forced in conscience

¹ Gal. i. 17.

² Vv. 2, 6*, οἱ δοκοῦντες, with the additions εἶναι τι in 6*, and στήλαι εἶναι, 'they who were reputed to be pillars,' in 9 (i.e., a narrower circle within the Twelve).

resist' even the Apostles¹; because as far as his consciousness reached, the unity in the circle of the Apostles, of whom he counted himself one, was not perfectly established, and a man without unity, a supreme authority divided against itself, was a monstrosity. His bitterest experiences sharpened his insight for the human weakness even of the Apostles; and he comes to place the possession of Love even higher than the possession of the Apostolate.² The Apostles, in his opinion, were invested with the most important office in the new Church of God,³ but close behind them he ranks the Christian Prophets, who, in noticeably close connection with the Apostles, are extolled in Eph. ii. 20 and iii. 5 as forming, jointly with the Apostles, the foundation of the new building, the inspired recipients of the final revelation.

Even in the purely Jewish Christian communities of Palestine, especially in Jerusalem, the authority of the Apostles during their lifetime can scarcely have been unlimited; the difference in spiritual fruitfulness and religious power between individual Apostles made itself too strongly felt, and, even if we accept Paul, perfect unanimity among them was not always the rule.⁴ The 15th chapter of Acts, and still more vv. xxi. 17-25, unconsciously teach us, in spite of the strong colouring from the author's preconceptions with which they are overlaid, that there could be no question whatever of the autocracy of the Apostles in the Primitive Community. Later generations were never confronted with the difficulties which hindered the contemporaries of the Apostles from conceding to them the high position logically consequent on the relation in which they stood to the Lord and the Gospel. From the beginning no dark side appeared in the picture; the world looked on with gratefulness that it was indebted to them for the Gospel and for sure knowledge; they were the nearest link in the chain by which men felt themselves bound to heaven. They were the mediators between the Dispenser of Salvation and those who enjoyed it; in order to believe in salvation men must trust them *unconditionally*: that is, it must regard them as a canonical authority.

¹ Gal. ii. 11.

² 1. Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11.

³ 1. Cor. xii. 28—xiii. 13.

⁴ Gal. ii. 12.

the traditions about Christ could only be guaranteed by the Apostles as eye- and ear-witnesses, did not once find expression in the time of which we are speaking; such witnesses still existed in considerable numbers, and men had not yet become suspicious. In the thought of that period 'the Apostles' were a *purely ideal Canon*, impalpable and uncontrollable, and therefore, in the event of differences, equally to be appealed to by both parties; they were but the expression of the strong conviction that after the ascension of Jesus men had ceased to become dependent for life and teaching on human volition alone, but committed everything to the decision of the highly favoured possessors of the Spirit of God, the called and chosen weapons of Jesus Christ; and that, further, the foundation and organisation of the great Gentile churches, which could not be referred to 'the Lord,' had taken place under the direction of infallible authority. Certainly this conviction could not be so universally maintained in the face of violent attacks from without, or of differences of opinion on fundamental questions within the communities; soon there could only be a written source from which to draw decisions as to what was Apostolic or non-Apostolic; if the Apostles were not to fade from sight altogether, some tangible sign of them must be forthcoming and must be handled in a manner worthy of them. Thus through this Canon, 'the Apostles,' a fresh movement was begun which was bound to end in the establishment of a strictly circumscribed circle of Apostolic writings and precepts.

§ 36. *The Preparatory Stages in the Canonisation of the New Testament Scriptures*

1. A gradual process made the Books of the New Testament the most sacred writings of Christendom. They did not attain this position immediately upon their outward completion; but it would be equally untrue to suppose that on a given day the decision of a majority in the Synod transformed them from ordinary books into Divine Records. The New Testament Canon is the result of a long-continued process, the first phases of which we have to reconstruct by hypothesis,

since direct testimony from such distant antiquity is not forthcoming. One thing is certain : before a book was canonised, it must have been tenderly and highly prized. And, moreover, this love and high esteem must have been very widely spread if canonisation not only aroused no opposition, but was nowhere considered as an innovation. Such a frame of mind, again, was the natural result of a close acquaintance with the books concerned, and must have been produced in an extraordinary degree in the decades before 140. Now, a knowledge of the contents of Christian books could only be obtained by the lower strata in the early Christian communities through public reading in the services of the Church. A large proportion of the believers consisted everywhere of hardworking slaves and illiterates, who could only get Christian knowledge and edification from these services in the churches. The 'many' who before 100 A.D. had attempted to write the history of the 'fulfilment,' certainly did not wish to write for the cultured few among their fellow-Christians, who were precisely those least in need of such books. Their first object was, not to win new converts, not even solely to provide assistance for the Christian teachers, the orators of the congregations, towards using whatever portions they pleased from among the materials thus arranged to suit their choice ; they addressed themselves to all believers : they counted on being read publicly in every sphere accessible to them. The extent of these spheres, and the places where their desire was fulfilled, were matters of chance. Well-merited oblivion soon fell to the lot of much of this literature ; large and favourably situated churches would very soon have possessed many of these historical books, and have used them in turns for their edification ; others again would have been content with a single Gospel ; but it is hardly likely that at about 140 there were any Christian communities which used no written records of the words and deeds of the Lord, or found the prophecies of the Old Testament and the addresses of their teachers sufficient for their edification, considering how little those teachers were in a position to paint the Lord for them in living colours.

The Apocalypse purported to convey a message from Heaven to Christendom—to the Christians of Asia in the first instance ; among these, then, it was naturally read aloud with

reverence, but no one dreamed of throwing it aside after a single reading; it was constantly introduced anew into the services of the Church, whenever the need was felt of joining in its cry of longing, 'Come, Lord Jesus,' or of receiving the comforting assurance 'Yea: I come quickly.'¹ And when should this need have disappeared, seeing that the fulfilment was still delayed? Even if the Apocalypse was, in the first instance, read aloud only in the Asiatic communities, its introduction into other provinces would have come about quite naturally, say, when foreign brethren, on their visits to Ephesus or Smyrna, experienced for the first time the passionate emotions called forth by the words of this book; they took it back with them to their homes, and wherever there was a taste for these ideas and the forms in which they were clothed, the Elders received the new gift gratefully, and made the whole community acquainted with the 'Revelation.' I do not wish to maintain that there was a *regular*, set reading of any Christian book in the Church services; when, in what order and in what portions the edifying literature of the Christians was read aloud, was a matter solely dependent on those who conducted the services. It is impossible to over-estimate the variety of custom in this respect; rules and laws on the subject existed nowhere, much less a well-organised system of *pericopae* for reading in the churches. The important point, however, is that in post-Apostolic times the churches did become accustomed to make use of writings of Christian origin, together with the old sacred books of Israel, for their common edification. And among such writings, beside many which disappeared later, and beside the Four Gospels and the Acts, which remained for all time, letters of the Apostles were early included.

Paul's Epistles to the churches were intended to be read aloud to those to whom they were addressed; but it would have been unnatural for a church which felt a strong love for its founder to have ignored his writings after a single reading. At those times, above all, in which his absence was specially felt, or when perhaps difficulties like those he had once treated had occurred again, men would turn eagerly to the letters from his beloved hand; when once they had

¹ Rev. xxii. 20.

felt how he lived again in those letters, what power emanated from such and such a passage, they would naturally determine to ensure such enjoyment to themselves more frequently in the future, and to draw goodly profit from this precious inheritance of their spiritual father. Soon, too, there would arise an exchange of possessions between communities which had friendly intercourse one with another: the Philippians would gratefully read the Epistles to their neighbours in Thessalonica side by side with their own Epistle, and so on; communities which themselves possessed nothing of the kind would address themselves to the more favoured towns. Presently there would appear no reason why Paul's Epistles alone should be thus honoured; they were read, not because the writer bore a high title, but because they were found to be edifying; if other communities held similar writings from their spiritual fathers or prominent teachers, such as Apollos or Barnabas, they would read and pass these on also with joy. It goes without saying that Paul's letters were entirely disregarded in the districts won by the false apostles who had so often made his life a burden to him; but apart from the fact that the terrible disturbances of the Jewish wars must, after 66, have considerably limited the productivity and love of agitation of the anti-Pauline movement; apart, too, from the fact that the death of 'those of repute' could not fail to exercise an influence towards mutual reconciliation—since, as appears from 2. Cor. x.—xiii., the bitterness of the strife was due to personal animosity rather than to material differences—the triumphant success of Paulinism must soon have silenced the Judaising opposition. The Gentile Christian element in the churches alone showed steady growth: of the Jews but a few individuals still found a bridge to lead them to the faith. The younger followers of Paul, who, unlike their master, had not begun by shaking off the yoke of Judaism, held language that was in no sense anti-Jewish, or calculated to wound Jewish susceptibilities, and former adversaries met in peace on the common ground of growing Catholicism. Ancient antipathies to Paul were referred to a misunderstanding,¹ the more credible by reason of the bitter complaints made by the brethren of the

¹ 1. Peter iii. 16.

Pauline churches at this time, about the misinterpretation which the Apostle's letters suffered through the madness of the Gnostics. A small and irreconcilable minority, holding beyond the reach of argument that fidelity to the Law in the Pharisaic sense was the consummation of righteousness, had voluntarily withdrawn from public life and from connection with the 'Church.' Pauline Epistles were probably admitted for public reading in Jerusalem and Joppa even before 140, as was the Apocalypse, despite its Jewish tone, in Corinth, Smyrna and Rome.

But 'Anagnosis' of this sort, as applied to a group of Christian writings which was at first constantly increasing, must be clearly distinguished from embodiment in a Canon. That such an Anagnosis took place is indisputable, because the Apostolic Fathers are familiar with sayings of the Lord which, from their form, clearly betray their dependence on written sources like our Gospels, and also because their acquaintance with Pauline Epistles is undeniable¹; but that a Canon was formed we cannot believe, because the way in which those documents were used teaches us too plainly how little the New was considered equal to the Old. True that when the reading aloud of Christian writings beside the Old Testament Scriptures first became the rule and was felt to be indispensable, it must have tended very much to efface the distinction; but the admission of a document to public reading in the worship of the Church implies nothing more in itself than that it was held to be edifying and useful to the community. The scruples of certain branches of Protestantism were unknown to the early, and especially to the earliest, Church. The correspondence between the churches or between their bishops, including purely business communications, was read out in the course of the service, as were the Acts of the Martyrs and the Lives of the Saints. Even in the fourth and fifth centuries it was ordained in individual provincial churches that anti-heretical writings should be read aloud on Sundays to the congregations, so as to arm the brethren everywhere against the factious and seductive arts of the heretics. But no one looked on these controversial writings as Canonical on that account.

¹ 1. Clem. xlvii. 1-5: 'Take up the letter of the blessed Apostle Paul.'

2. It would be waste of time to make so much as a positive conjecture concerning the beginnings of a collection of the New Testament writings. Only one thing is certain: that no collector aimed at putting together a New Testament, that the idea of a new Canon did not call forth the collection, but that a New Testament grew, or was composed, out of partial collections which were already in existence. Love for the great Apostle of the Gentiles may very early (perhaps even during his lifetime) have inspired the attempt to seek out and collect all that could be obtained of his Epistles; and if some of the oldest quotations from the Gospels are cited as standing in the *Gospel* by some witness who certainly had several Gospel writings before him, this figure of speech is to be explained by the custom of speaking of the Gospel as a unity, and by the permanent importance of this conception: it was the one, true, redeeming Gospel. In view of the great bulk of these writings, it is quite improbable that in the earliest times several Gospels together could have been presented as a whole, or *corpus*, in outward appearance. The hypothesis that after 80 A.D. a complete collection of Paul's Epistles to the churches was sent out, possibly from Corinth, and dispersed through Christendom, has no foundation; nor does it receive much support from the fact that the older ecclesiastical writers do not appear to use, or rather to know, anything like the whole of Paul's Epistles, or even all to know the same Epistles. To deny to the author of 1. Clement the knowledge of 2. Corinthians, because he only mentions and analyses¹ the letter of the Apostle to the Corinthians, is too rash a conclusion (Augustine, for instance, speaks in the same way of 'the Epistle to the Thessalonians,' though he was equally well acquainted with both the First and the Second); but it is also impossible to prove the writer's acquaintance with 2. Corinthians from one or two points of contact. There is no difficulty in assuming that in different churches, before the period of Canonisation, collections of letters which were originally small were perhaps repeatedly enlarged solely for the purpose of reading aloud in the services. Those churches where the Epistles of Paul were used in public worship at all were not likely to place obstacles

¹ Ch. xlvii.

in the way of their complete collection ; the fear that without careful examination spurious writings might easily be smuggled in did not belong to the times of which we are treating, any more than an obstinate conservative predilection for old tradition belongs to a young religion. The art which was so useful to Christianity was that of immediately regarding as traditional the new material produced by a very rich and rapid development, and of declaring it to be a thing accepted in all places, at all times and by all men. This most ancient Catholic art was brilliantly exemplified in the history of the Canon, though the actual makers of the New Testament certainly had no suspicion of this merit of theirs. Nevertheless, unity was in all respects the later product. It is but a poor satisfaction to imagine that at any rate the collection of Pauline Epistles was produced in its final shape all at once, when we are obliged to give up the far more important point, that the New Testament was completed at one stroke 'from time immemorial.'

Consequently : in post-Apostolic times, writings of Christian origin found a place in the Church services ; kindred writings were gathered together and in some cases written on the same roll ; but as to their nature and number, their place and time, no definite conclusions are possible. These are questions which need expect no answer even from the fortunate discovery of early Christian writings supposed to be lost ; nothing but the most consummate folly could, in the year 1900, 'cherish great hopes that the *original New Testament* will also be found' among the treasures unearthed in some mosque at Damascus. The original in this case means the most complete diversity : its development is determined not by fixed principles, but by use and chance, by taste, nay, even by the pecuniary resources available at a given moment.

CHAPTER II

THE CREATION OF THE PRIMITIVE FORM OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT CANON (c. 140—c. 200)§ 37. *The Facts of the Case*

1. THE writings of the best-known Apologist, Justin Martyr, can be dated with tolerable certainty. He died at Rome in 165; about 150 he wrote his two 'Apologies,' and somewhat later the 'Dialogue' with the Jew Trypho, both in defence of Christianity, the former in opposition to Gentile mistrust, the latter against Jewish blindness. He makes great use of the Old Testament, and lays special stress on the harmony between Prophecy and Fulfilment: the Holy Ghost spoke by the mouths of the Prophets. But when in the *Apology*¹ he refers his Gentile readers to 'our Scriptures' (τὰ ἡμέτερα συγγράμματα) he would have them understand thereby neither the Old Testament only (*Apol.* i. 67, τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν) nor all the productions of Christian authorship, including his own dissertations: he meant a fairly definite body of writings, the books in which Christian doctrine was authentically laid down. In Justin's view, the gift of the Spirit was what guaranteed the truth and divinity of the Word: and since in his *Dialogue*² he exclaims with pride 'To this day the prophetic gifts are still at work among us,' he could of course rank the prophet John with the prophets of the Old Testament, and claim unconditional belief in his prophecy of the millennium (*Rev.* xx.). Nevertheless, the ordinary Christian prophet would not receive so much honour at his hands, and it is not without design that to the words 'a man by name John' Justin adds 'one of Christ's Apostles.' For him the twelve Apostles are the

¹ i. 28.² § 81.

teachers of the truth, 'even for us of a later generation,' he implies, through the writings they have left. In the *Apology*, i. 66, he tells us that the Apostles guaranteed the correctness of the Christian celebration of the Supper, a record of which they had handed down in the Memoirs (*ἀπομνημονεύματα*) arranged by them, and called *Gospels*. Thus Justin regards the authors of the Gospels as Apostles (he uses the term 'Memoirs' merely to be better understood by those of his readers who possessed Greek culture: the ecclesiastical name, it need hardly be said, is *εὐαγγέλια*); and the fact that they were eye-witnesses and endowed with the Spirit of the Lord places the authenticity of their Gospels beyond question for him. Then we find from i. 67 that the first act in the worship of God on Sundays was to read aloud before the whole congregation a portion of Scripture, either from the 'Memoirs' of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets. It seems to me that there is more here than a mere 'germ of the New Testament Canon'; according to Justin (and he is a witness as to the state of things in the Roman community at least), the Gospels and the writings of the Prophets are placed on an equal footing; they may be used interchangeably as required, and certainly the 'Memoirs' belonged to the most precious of 'our Scriptures.'¹ It is true that what he quotes from these new books are almost always Sayings of the Lord²; it is from the Lord Christ that Justin believes he has learnt what he teaches, as well as from the Prophets who went before him. But the important point is that the Lord was to be found in written records from the hands of 'the most trustworthy persons'³; it was in books that this incontrovertible Canon was contained in incontrovertible form; therefore in worth and dignity such books could not stand lower, in the estimation of a Christian, than those of the Old Testament.

With this the decisive step is taken; the Gospel, the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ, has condensed into a number of written Gospels, authentic records of the same, which share his Divinity. Henceforth quotations from them⁴ are introduced with the formula 'it is written' (*γέγραπται*), and

¹ i. 28.² *λόγια κυρίου*.³ *Apol.* i. 33⁴ *Dial.* 49, 100.

even with ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, in *the Gospel*. The impression which Justin leaves upon us, of accepting the accounts of the Evangelists as true only because of the Old Testament, only because their testimony coincided with the predictions of the Prophets, arises from the necessities of his apologetic reasoning; the appeal which he makes to the great antiquity of the truth—a point which he considers of much importance—could not of course be made in the case of books which had only lately come into existence. Another question is, what books Justin included in his 'Memoirs.' Matthew was certainly one of them; the claims of Mark and Luke are favoured, amongst other passages, by ch. 103 of the *Dialogue*, where, besides the Apostles of Jesus, their *companions* are also named as authors, though with more hesitation. He is unacquainted with the contents of John, though aware of its existence.¹ But many of his quotations from the words of Jesus depart so far from the form in which we have them in our Gospels that it is difficult to deny him the knowledge of at least one Gospel unknown to us. He accepted as a Gospel, without criticism, whatever he met with under that name; scarcely, however, on his own private judgment, but rather following the custom in his community.

Justin is also *acquainted* with other New Testament writings: some Epistles of Paul,² the Epistle to the Hebrews, and certainly the Acts as well as Luke, but he does not quote them as standard authorities. There is nothing remarkable in the fact that he does not mention Paul by name, since he does not name the other Apostles; and the fact that he does not actually speak of an Anagnosis of the letters of the Apostles does not prove that there was no such thing in his time. It must not be forgotten that he stands in the annals of Rome between Clement and Tatian, both of whom set great store by Paul's Epistles; it merely did not occur to him to rank these letters with the Gospels. Their authority was a derivative, transmitted one; the only occasion on which the word of the Apostles comes into comparison with the divine word of the Old Testament is where it treats of Christ and represents the transmission of his word and his power of salvation to later generations. This, then, is the primitive form of the New

¹ See *Apol.* i. 61.

² E.g. Romans.

Testament Canon, which can be traced in the most advanced communities about the year 150: in place of 'the Lord,' several books of Gospels revealing the Lord. Thus even in the 'Teaching of the Apostles' 'the Gospel' is quoted as an existing written tradition concerning Jesus: and in the Second Epistle of Clement the case stands exactly as with Justin, the Gospel being treated as Scripture; at least one Gospel-writing which is now lost is used in that Epistle, but probably not the same as that quoted by Justin.

It follows that the oldest Canon of the New Testament was single in form. As we found that 'the Lord' was its ideal primitive form, extended later by the addition of 'the Apostles,' so the tangible actual Canon at first contained only 'the Scriptures which relate everything concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.' To be able to bring them into relation to the Apostles, as their writers or inspirers, enhanced their value, but they attained the same rank as the Old Testament, not for being Apostolic, but as Gospels, and it was not till later that the canonising of Apostolic Gospels led further to the canonising of Apostolic Epistles and prophecies.

2. The Canon of Justin, however, must not immediately be regarded as the Canon of the Catholic Church, which was itself in embryo at that time (about 150). Elsewhere there appears to have been less inclination to exchange 'the Lord' for definite written accounts of him. Papias of Hierapolis in Phrygia is a contemporary of Justin; Eusebius and some later writers knew of a work of his in five books, consisting of interpretations of the *Sayings of the Lord* (λογίων κυριακῶν ἐξηγήσεις). We do not get a clear idea of the character of this work: it is uncertain, in particular, whether the author rather aimed at being a translator (from the Aramaic original into Greek) or an expositor, a commentator; in any case he had prepared himself for this work by a long-continued, careful collection of the Lord's sayings. He had at least Matthew and Mark¹ before him, and, Eusebius thinks, the Gospel of the Hebrews as well. But these sources were not canonical authorities in his eyes; he preferred to draw his material from the 'Elders' (παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καλῶς ἔμαθον): 'And if I met with

¹ See pp. 302-305, 317-319.

a disciple of the Elders, I questioned him fully as to the words of those Elders, what was said by Andrew, Peter or Philip, what by Thomas, James, John or Matthew, or any other of the disciples of the Lord, and what is said by Aristion and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord. *For I was of opinion that what I could derive from books would not serve me so well as what I could obtain from the living and enduring voice* (ζῶσα φωνὴ καὶ μένουσα).¹ We could not have a more definite rejection of any canonical valuation of the Gospel writings, in favour of the old unwritten traditions (παράδοσις ἀγραφος); oral tradition guaranteed by known and trustworthy intermediaries seemed to Papias to be better secured from falsification and error than was the case with written memoirs. But to a man like Eusebius he must have appeared exceedingly limited on account of this antiquated point of view, even if the tradition had not brought many very doubtful sayings of the Lord into his collection; but he is still a high authority to the great Catholic Irenæus (about 180), although the latter was as zealous for the Scriptures as Eusebius himself. Thus the conservative attitude of Papias with regard to this new canonical structure was not at once felt to be ecclesiastically incorrect; his point of view was that of many at the time. It is probable, on the face of it, that such an active collector as Papias was also acquainted with other early Christian literature; we have no reason to doubt the statement that he recognised the contents of the Apocalypse as genuine Revelation: the book must have been welcome to his strong belief in the Millennium. As to the quotations¹ from 1. John and 1. Peter which Eusebius found in his writings, they need not have consisted in a solemn appeal as though to Holy Scripture; in such 'statistics with a purpose' Eusebius does not distinguish between the mere employment of passages and actual citation.

Much of what is now the New Testament must, then, have been read aloud for edification in the church of Hierapolis and elsewhere about 150, and must have had a religious influence on the community, just as in Rome; but the feeling that the regular Scriptures of the Christians *must* include some

¹ μαρτύρια.

of Christian origin, serving to keep alive the memory of Christ, does not arise everywhere equally early. The new material for public reading increases; the Epistles of the martyr Ignatius are sent from the Church of Smyrna to that of Philippi at the latter's request. A missive of the Roman Bishop Soter is read aloud in the Sunday service at Corinth (about 180) beside 1. Clement. But nothing is to be learnt about the esteem in which the Gospels were held from such facts as these. When Hegesippus wrote his reminiscences, about 180, he could report that in his travels he had found all the communities at one as to their doctrine, which was regulated upon the Law, the Prophets and 'the Lord.' In his mouth 'the Lord' is here probably an archaism for the 'Gospels,' as when elsewhere he places together 'the Divine Scriptures and the Lord'; if not, Hegesippus belongs to the same category as Papias, but this admission would not interfere with his respect for the holy Choir of the Apostles, and his close acquaintance with the Canonical Gospels.¹

3. But beside Justin, who consciously extended the idea of the 'Scriptures' to the Gospels, and Papias, who, in old age as in youth, only held as Divine Scriptures what the Lord himself had so held, there stands another Christian, who extended the new Canon farther, and conferred Canonical dignity upon the second principal part of the New Testament, the Epistles of Paul. This was the Gnostic Marcion. Gnosticism, in its original form older than Christianity, had very early pressed in upon the Church, and had practised upon it its peculiar art of transforming everything, even the most chaste simplicity, into chaotic disorder by passing it through its own witches' cauldron. Naturally, it had little inclination to form a Canon: the prejudice of the 'man of the spirit,' for whom a double truth was the natural condition, and who looked upon a universally valid rule of thought and life as an abomination, was particularly concerned to remove the limits imposed by a sacred letter upon the speculations or the desires of the individual. Nevertheless, the most prominent representatives of this tendency, such as Basilides and Valentine, were very anxious

¹ As well as with Jewish unwritten tradition.

to prove the Christian character of their views by written documents. They appealed indeed to special traditions about Jesus¹ and the Apostles, but were not inclined to reject what the Church used for her edification; rather they proved their acumen by the art of interpreting the sacred writings of the Church in a sense favourable to their own imaginings; they believed that they and their scholars alone understood rightly the 'words of the Saviour,' and the first Commentary on John was written by a Valentinian (see p. 401). But the man through whom Gnosticism became a Church, existing for centuries living and self-dependent, and who was certainly in many respects very different from his above-mentioned associates, particularly in the manifest preponderance he gave to the religious and moral needs over the intellectual, anticipated the great church from which he separated himself by drawing up a new Christian Canon.

Marcion, from his home in Pontus, made his way to Rome through Asia Minor, and was active there between c. 140 and 170; he rejected the Old Testament as incompatible with the New, asserting that it contained but the revelation of the Creator of the world, the friend of blood and war, the God of Jewish righteousness. The true, good God had sent Jesus to redeem men from the tyranny of the righteous God; but the Jews, even including the Twelve, did not understand him; Paul alone understood the Gospel and successfully combated the falsification it had suffered through Jewish additions; the truth, the freedom-giving truth, was only to be found with the real Jesus and his real Apostle. Marcion himself had no wish to be the founder of a religion: he only tried to be a true interpreter of an existing revelation, the comprehension of which he had won by a study, unprejudiced as he believed, of all the reputed records of revelation. And, at all events, he shunned the allegorical interpretations which enabled the Church to conceal from herself the discrepancies between the Jewish and the Christian religions, although he rivalled every Catholic in arbitrary violence to the text in the interest of his dogma.

¹ Such as the Gospel of Matthias.

Marcion was too conscientious not to deduce the full consequences from what he knew; he was not a man of compromise or of ingenious half-measures; in his Canon there was no room for Jewish Scriptures; nothing was sacred in his eyes that did not originate with the Lord or with Paul, and so his 'Scripture' is composed of two sections: the *Gospel* and the *Apostle* (also τὸ ἀποστολικόν). Among the Gospel writings current in the Church he approved most cordially of Luke, probably because he believed its author to have been a disciple of Paul. But he could not make use of the actual Luke of the Church, for many passages in that Gospel recognised the Old Testament and favoured Jewish conceptions; accordingly he subjected it to a most searching revision, discarding everything that contradicted his anti-Jewish, hyper-spiritualistic point of view (e.g., the whole of the Birth-story and the Old Testament quotations). He was firmly convinced that in doing this he was not wresting the word of God to suit his own theology, but only restoring what had been corrupted by pseudo-Christian 'Protectores Judaismi.' His 'Apostolicum' contains ten Pauline Epistles—the nine to the churches, and Philemon—but he appears not to have known the Pastoral Epistles.¹ He could not have had much in common with the Epistle to the Hebrews, because of the continual references it contains to the Old Testament, but apart from that it probably did not occur to him to include it, because no one in his surroundings ascribed it to Paul. Naturally, he had to clear the text of the Epistles from Judaising interpolations as thoroughly as that of the Gospel, and for this the Church bitterly called him the 'falsifier of the truth'; but he never realised that in these arbitrary proceedings he had permitted his own likings (τὰ ἀρέσκοντα αὐτῷ) to decide as to what was Canonical and what was spurious; what his own faith did not admit could not belong to God's Word, and therefore he felt obliged to strike it out. How far he employed the old-established Church formulæ in referring to or in making use of this Bible of his we do not know; but certain it is that he looked upon it as a Canonical authority, every word of which was sacred. He wrote a great work,

¹ See pp. 180 fol.

the 'Antitheses,' in order to point out the contradictions between the false Jewish 'Scripture' and the genuine new 'Scripture,' and to offer with the utmost completeness the true explanation of all parts of the latter; here he is but the commentator of a Divine text, and although his sect afterwards included these 'Antitheses' in their Canon beside the 'Gospel' and the 'Apostle,' this was done quite against the intention of their master. In spite of the fierce hatred which the Church bestowed from the very first upon this most dangerous of all the Gnostics, she did but follow his lead in drawing up the new Canon, by adding to the Gospels of the Lord the Letters of his Apostles.

4. In the decades following the time of Justin's activity, we may observe a double tendency in ecclesiastical literature, that of a further consolidation, a narrower circumscription of the new Gospel Canon, and that of a closer approximation of the completed collection of Pauline Epistles to the Gospels. In the Epistle of Polycarp, the date of which is unfortunately quite uncertain, the Gospels of Matthew and Luke are made use of, but the Epistle is so short that this is no complete evidence for the exclusion of all 'Apocryphal' Gospels; so much the more marked, however, is the enthusiasm with which the author refers to the blessed and glorious Paul: he also alludes expressly to his Epistles, passages from which so often find an echo in his writings that we may be quite sure he was thoroughly familiar with the whole body of them, including the Pastorals, and lived, as it were, in an atmosphere of them. The same holds good of the Acts, 1. Peter, 1. John, and 1. Clement. Indeed, in xii. 1 we might even say that he applied the term 'Scriptures' to the letters of the Apostles, if the Latin translation (which is here our only authority), with its 'his scripturis dictum est' as applied both to Psalm iv. 5 and Eph. iv. 26, were a literal rendering. That is, however, not certain. Tatian, who wrote his 'Oratio ad Græcos' about the year 155, a few years after the appearance of Justin's 'Apology,' took up almost the same position with regard to the literature of the New Testament. He introduces¹ a sentence out of the prologue

¹ Ch. 13.

of John¹ most impressively as τὸ εἰρημένον. Athenagoras, who lived about twenty years later, appeals with the same formula (φησίν) to a sentence in the Gospels² as he does to Proverbs viii. 22; and the way in which he appeals to 1. Cor. xv. 53, and 2. Cor. v. 10 as authoritative evidence (κατὰ τὸν ἀπόστολον), shows that he recognised very little difference between a sentence in a letter of the Apostle and one in a book of Prophecy. His contemporary Melito, Bishop of Sardis, occupied himself with an accurate enumeration of the 'Books of the Old Covenant,' the 'Old Books,' and he would hardly have expressed himself thus if the books of the New Covenant, consequently a new Canon, had not been a familiar idea to him.

Most of the ecclesiastical literature of those decades has disappeared, and of some which might perhaps belong to that time the date is too uncertain; but the advance from the position of Justin is sufficiently indicated, apart from the works of the writers mentioned above, by the books of Theophilus of Antioch, addressed to Autolycus and written about 190. The Gospels are here distinctly ranked with the Prophets; their writers are spoken of as equally inspired (πνευματοφόροι) with those of the Old Testament Scriptures. That he ever used an 'Apocryphal' Gospel cannot be proved; we may well believe that to him the sacred number of four was an established idea. He regards the Apocalypse in the same light as Justin. But he lays far more stress than his predecessors upon the Pauline Epistles, again including the Pastorals; they have indeed not yet reached the high position of the Gospels, but Theophilus does not shrink from presenting a conglomerate of Pauline sayings as a 'Commandment of the Divine Word.' From this it is but a step to the placing of the Apostolic writings on a perfect equality with the Gospel. That this step however was not yet absolutely taken is clearly shown by the 'Acta Martyrum Scilitanorum.' Here we read that in July 180 the question of a Proconsul, 'What manner of things lie in your cupboards?' was answered by a North African Christian with the words, 'Our books, and also the Epistles of Paul, the holy man' (αἱ καθ' ἡμᾶς βιβλοί καὶ αἱ πρὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐπιστολαὶ Παύλου τοῦ ὁσίου ἀνδρός).

¹ John i. 5.² Matthew v. 28.

Since the Gospels cannot have been wanting if the Epistles of Paul were there, we must imagine that the 'books' referred either to them alone or to a number of books including them. The original Latin text of the Protocol may have run, according to the best recently discovered manuscript, '*Libri venerandi libri legis divinae et epistulae Pauli viri iusti*' (a later recension says, '*Libri evangeliorum et epistolae Pauli viri sanctissimi apostoli*'); but in any case the passage shows that the Epistles of Paul were not yet reckoned as part of the Divine Law, as among the *books* *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, from which no one will here venture to exclude the Gospels; but that they were treasured as books for public reading by the churches, and could be submitted to the authorities with a good conscience. I wish neither to maintain nor to contradict the theory that the Scilitan Martyrs had exactly four Gospels in their cupboard, as a third recension would have us believe. This recension, moreover, has the addition which is so characteristic of the needs of a later time, '*et omnem divinitus inspiratam scripturam.*' We may conclude, then, that the Gospel had probably penetrated everywhere in the Church by about 180 as a component part of the Holy Scripture, i.e. of the Law; but what this Gospel consisted of was not regularly defined in all churches alike.

The best evidence of this is given by the above-mentioned apologist Tatian, in a work which at first sight would seem to upset our last conclusion altogether. According to Eusebius,¹ Tatian, when in later years he had become the head of a separate Encratite church, prepared a 'Harmony of the Gospels' under the name *Διὰ τεσσάρων*. He arranged a continuous account of Jesus (whether only in his native Syriac tongue or in both Greek and Syriac is here without importance) out of the Gospel writings at his command, omitting all parallel accounts, and reconciling apparent contradictions; he probably made use of this opportunity to exalt the Encratite elements in these traditions, and to give a different colour to any inconvenient sections. He composed this Gospel for practical use, not with any scientific aims; almost the whole Syrian Church accepted it; the Syrian

¹ *Hist. Eccles.* IV. xxix. 6.

doctor Aphraates (c. 340) drew his knowledge of the Gospel material chiefly from this Diatessaron. Ephraim (about 360) wrote a Syriac commentary on it, and Theodoretus of Cyrus,¹ in the district of the Euphrates, though he burnt several hundred copies, had great difficulty in eliminating this work from the services of the churches in his diocese, and in substituting for it the 'separate' Gospels—that is to say, the four Gospels in their natural limits.

If the Church might and could suffer such a condition of things as one Gospel in place of four, until far into the fifth century, she would certainly not have objected to such a substitution about the year 175. Tatian did not write the Diatessaron as a heretic or as a sectary, nor even for the benefit of his own sect, but did the work in all good faith; for him, as for all his Christian contemporaries, what was divine in the Gospel was the tradition about Jesus: it did not seem at all essential to have this tradition in twofold or in fourfold form. It was the contents which were of inestimable value; the apotheosis of the letter had not yet taken place. Perhaps even the conclusion drawn from the name *Διὰ τεσσάρων*, that Tatian only made use of the four known Gospels, is a mistake; this word is a technical musical term for 'accord,' 'harmony,' the ostensible foundation of all music,² and he might have made use of the name to indicate that his work was an harmonious abridgment of the different Gospel writings, whether drawn from three or from five. In any case, it was a Gospel harmony or symphony. Certainly, however, what we know of the Diatessaron would incline us to the belief that it is founded on our four Gospels alone, and consequently that Tatian was more careful in dealing with the Gospel legends than his teacher Justin.

About the same time there existed a party, dispersed through Asia Minor, called the Alogi by their opponents; they refused to accept John, because his theology offended them; they certainly did not feel themselves to be heretics and revolutionists, but defenders of the old Church tradition against the new learning; nor were they at first reproached with refusing to accept *four* divine Gospels, but simply with

¹ † 457.

² Cf. Dion Cassius, xxxvii. 18.

attacking a doctrine which was that of the Church, and ratified by the highest authorities.

It is a remarkable coincidence (or is it due to later confusion ?) that the same Tatian who established, like Marcion, one Gospel instead of many as *the* Gospel, is also said to have issued, like Marcion, a new recension of the Pauline Epistles, ostensibly freeing them only from faults of style. In any case, this showed how anxious he was that these Epistles should have an unimpeded influence on the community, how highly he valued them, and at the same time how little the externals, the form, appeared to him sacred and unalterable. The Church could not long deal so freely with the fundamental sources of her faith ; the 'holy things' which she possessed in written form must find a place of safety against the encroachments of human caprice ; soon, then, we shall expect to find the conceptions of the New Testament more narrowly circumscribed, more clearly defined.

5. Towards the close of the second century, the new Canon had already acquired quite a different appearance in the standard literature of the Church from that which it bore in Justin's day. It is enough, first of all, to refer to the writings of Irenæus, bishop of Lyons,¹ of Tertullian, a Presbyter of Carthage,² and of Clement, a theologian of Alexandria.³ The principal work of the first-named, the five books against all heresies, is unfortunately only partially preserved in the original Greek, but the old Latin translation is trustworthy, and there is no doubt as to the time of its composition—between 178 and 195. Still more important is the fact—of which we may be quite certain—that Irenæus, although by birth an Asiatic and at the end of his life a Gallican bishop, represents, on account of his Roman training, the Roman standpoint in ecclesiastical questions. Tertullian represents that of the African Church ; and he began to write about the time that Irenæus ceased. The countless tracts and controversial writings of this inimitable man fall between the years 195 and 220 ; he wrote them in part as a member of the Church Universal, in part as a Montanistic sectary. Clement, who surpassed both in breadth, reading and intellectual freedom, shows us the views concerning

¹ † c. 200.

² † c. 230.

³ † c. 220.

the Canonical books held in Alexandria, which had by now become the centre—practically owing to his influence—of the theological culture of the Greek world. Where these three agree, it certainly does not follow that the whole of Christendom was at one with them—many a community had not moved so fast as these leaders—but through them the path was marked out which the whole Church must follow sooner or later; by them the decision was made. If on certain points they do not agree, this clearly shows that the Canon was not the result of consultation and decrees in council; the very way in which it came into being ought to prepare us for local and provincial differences; it was the task of a still later generation to remove these differences, and to realise here also the ideal of Catholicity.

Now, these three agree on two principal points: first, that the new Gospel Canon was strictly limited, and consisted of the four Gospels of Matthew, John (themselves Apostles) and Mark and Luke (Apostles' disciples); this was the only, but also the absolutely authentic, tradition about the Lord, or, rather, it was a substitute for the Lord; and secondly, that beside these four Gospels there had arisen a series of Apostolic writings, which held equal authority as the second half of the new Holy Scripture; they were in like manner the sole but authentic source of Apostolic teaching and rules; in short, they represented the Apostles. The Pauline Epistles formed the kernel of this section. Consequently, the primitive form of the New Testament of to-day was created about 200; after this there was nothing needed but its recognition in all the churches, and the establishment of the same definite boundaries between canonical and uncanonical for the Apostolic writings as that which had been achieved for the Gospels between 140 and 200.

To Irenæus the fourfold form of the Gospel¹ is so much a matter of course that he finds it prefigured in all kinds of theosophic fancies, such as the four winds and the four quarters of the world; he was the first, indeed, to make the famous

¹ III. xi. 8, ὁ λόγος ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν τετράμορφον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἐν δὲ πνεύματι συνεχόμενον.

identification of the four Beasts of Revelation¹ with the four Evangelists (Matthew with the man, Luke with the calf, John with the eagle, Mark with the lion—but Irenæus reverses the last two symbols, while others again arranged them differently); every attack on the number four, whether to introduce more or fewer embodiments of the Gospel, seems to him heretical presumption. And in authoritative value these Gospels were in no way behind the old sacred books; in II. xxviii. 2 fol., for instance, he asserts that all ‘Scriptures’ were of the Holy Spirit, perfect, and the gift of God; in his employment of citations he makes no difference between Evangelistic and Old Testament materials. The same may be said of Tertullian from his earliest to his latest writings.² He speaks of the ‘Evangelicum instrumentum’—that is to say, the ‘authoritative record’ existing in the four Gospels. Clement quotes words from all four Gospels as words of ‘Scripture,’³ and distinguishes⁴ between ‘the four Gospels handed down to us’ and the Gospel according to the Egyptians, whose ‘words of the Lord’ were not sufficiently trustworthy.

But when Tertullian appeals to the ‘Divinum instrumentum,’ or even to the ‘totum instrumentum utriusque testamenti,’ he has, besides the Old Testament, not only the books of the Gospel, but a number of Apostolic writings in view. ‘Evangelicae et Apostolicae literae’ stand, for him, beside ‘lex et prophetae.’ The Apostolic writings (‘apostoli literae’), just as much as the Gospel of the Lord, certify that the Church has *one baptism*, and in the *De Baptismo*, 2, a sentence of Paul’s is introduced before a logion of Jesus taken from Matthew, as a Divine utterance. The equality of 1. Corinthians with the Old Testament cannot be more clearly expressed than in the *De Oratione*, 22 (‘apostolus eodem utique spiritu actus, quo cum omnis Scriptura divina tum et illa Genesis digesta est’). Even Irenæus⁵ distinctly reckons the Pauline Epistles, like the Gospel of Luke, with the ‘Scriptures,’ i.e. with the record of revelation contained in the two Testaments, and incapable of self-contradiction; and although

¹ Rev. iv. 7; Ezek. i. 10, x. 14.

² Principally the *Contra Marcionem*, iv. 2.

⁴ III. xiii. 93.

³ E.g., *Strom.* VI. xviii. 164.

⁵ E.g., III. xii. 12.

none of his quotations from Paul (which amount to over 200) are made with the solemn introductory formula—i.e. directly designated as *Scripture*—yet he treats the Gospels in almost the same manner. Here, on New Testament ground, Irenæus is perfectly at home, and even makes a point of identifying the sources whence he draws with some precision; while with the Old Testament quotations he often does not know to which book he is referring. But even if Irenæus consciously distinguished Scriptures (i.e. the Old Testament), Gospels and Apostles, that would only show that he was under the influence of an older habit of speech, in which the three degrees still existed. I cannot discover in Irenæus the slightest trace of the idea that he looked upon the Pauline Epistles merely as the secondary authorities for his Scriptural proof, for in that case it would indeed be extraordinary that he should almost have preferred the secondary to the primary!

Clement of Alexandria, too, seldom quotes sentences of Paul as 'Scripture,'¹ but neither does he apply this term very frequently to the Gospels.² The Apostle's words are made use of in argument quite promiscuously, along with words of the Lord and of Scripture; the Prophets, the Gospel and the Apostle make together a 'Scripture of the Lord' rich in unerring wisdom.³ Finally, the difference in the manner of quotation which may still be observed centuries later, is explained by the necessity of making the *new* sources of Revelation known as such; but there was no common name for these which would at the same time indicate their close connection with the Old Testament. It is true that 'both Testaments' were already spoken of, but in doing so Clement of Alexandria, as well as Tertullian, thinks more of the contents of the books concerned than of the books themselves.⁴ Men accustomed to give two names to the Old Scriptures, the Law and the Prophets, would probably find it easy to express the dual nature of the New Canon in the words 'the Gospel and the Apostles' (or *εὐαγγελικὰ καὶ ἀποστολικά*).

But the second and younger part of it was not nearly so

¹ *Strom.* I. xvii. 87–xviii. 88.

² E.g., *Strom.* VI. xviii. 164.

³ *Strom.* VII. xvi. 94–97, αἱ κυριακαὶ γραφαί, or else in the singular.

⁴ *Strom.* VI. v. 42.

well defined as the first. Everyone included the thirteen letters of the Apostle *κατ' ἐξοχήν*—for that Irenæus does not mention Philemon is a mere chance. But Paul had not been the only Apostle; it would be impossible to imagine any reason why the Church should reject the epistles, discourses, etc. of the Twelve, and we are therefore not surprised to find that 1. Peter, 1. and 2. John (the absence of 3. John may be due to chance), as well as the Acts of the Apostles as treated of by Luke, were valued by Irenæus as highly as Paul's own words.¹ In my opinion, Irenæus knew the Epistle of James and the Epistle to the Hebrews, but not as component parts of Holy Scripture; he treats them in the same manner as the Pauline Epistles had been treated forty years before. On the other hand, he has the highest possible esteem for the Apocalypse, the book of the Apostle-Prophet. Tertullian proceeds in much the same way: besides the thirteen Pauline Epistles, he includes in the Apostolic 'instruments,' the Apocalypse, the Acts, 1. Peter, 1. John and Jude. The addition of the last-named is worthy of note, and the absence of 2. and 3. John in Tertullian's writings is not absolutely certain evidence of their absence from his *Canon*. The Epistle of James is uncertain; the Epistle to the Hebrews he once quotes expressly as an Epistle of Barnabas.² All trace of 2. Peter is wanting. Clement of Alexandria includes in his 'Apostolicum,' the Acts, fourteen Epistles of Paul (indeed he is particularly fond of quoting 'the Apostle' in passages from Hebrews), the Apocalypse, and, of the Catholic Epistles, undoubtedly 1. Peter, 1. and 2. John, and Jude. According to Eusebius (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, VI. xiv. 1) he had given a short summary of all the Catholic Epistles—including, therefore, 3. John, James and 2. Peter—in his 'Outlines' (*ὑποτυπώσεις*); as we cannot however, verify the correctness of this report, the question must remain undecided. But the fact that the extensive writings of Clement which have come down to us nowhere betray any acquaintance with these three Epistles, seems to me very remarkable in the case of James and 2. Peter, though in that of 3. John it is of small importance.

Thus we see that the three great men of the Græco-Latin

E.g., III. xiv. xv.

² *De Pudic.* 20.

Church, about 200 A.D., agree to include in the second part of the New Testament, thirteen Epistles of Paul, 1. Peter and 1. John, the Acts and the Apocalypse. The opinion as to the Epistle to the Hebrews and the five other Catholic Epistles—so far as they were known at all—remained undecided even in the principal communities. But, on the other hand, the decision as to the rejection of books which were cast out later on as Apocryphal was also extremely variable. Irenæus¹ is certainly very fond of mentioning the *Scripture* (ἱκανωτάτη γραφή) of Clement of Rome²; Hermas is introduced³ by the words καλῶς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή ἡ λέγουσα, in the midst of quotations from Genesis, Malachi, Ephesians and Matthew; and this is not the only evidence of the high esteem in which the Roman Apocalypse was held; Tertullian, too, recognises the Scriptural authority of 'that Hermas whose work bears the title of "The Shepherd."' The value of this older testimony is not lessened by the fact that when he afterwards became a Montanist, he mocked at the 'Shepherd who only loved adulterers'; his change of opinion only shows that dogmatic considerations were more effective than historical in the settlement of the Canon. Clement of Alexandria refers still more frequently to Hermas, and also to the Epistle of Barnabas, 1. Clement and the 'Teaching of the Apostles.' Moreover, certain 'Apocryphal' sayings of the Lord and of the Apostles are to be found in his writings. But considering his wide range and his unexacting standard, we must not conclude too hastily, from his own individual inclination towards the most comprehensive use possible of everything valuable in the tradition, that such was also the custom of his church, whether that of Alexandria or of Palestine. Be that as it may, several of the above-mentioned works, besides Hermas, were read aloud in the services of the Church about 200 A.D., without any clear line of distinction being drawn between them and the writings of the Apostles.

6. We have still one more witness (although an anonymous one) as to the position of the new Canon about 200, the only one to treat of this subject *ex officio*. This is the

¹ III. iii. 3.² IV. xx. 2.³ 1. Clem.⁴ *De Orat.* xvi.

Muratorianum (or Canon of Muratori ¹). In 1740 the Milanese librarian L. A. Muratori ² published a fragment, eighty-five lines long (each line consisting of about thirteen or fourteen syllables) and written in barbarous Latin, of a Codex embracing a number of documents, with hermeneutic glosses, dating from about the year 700, and formerly in the possession of the Monastery of Bobbio. The conclusion was illegible; it began in the middle of a sentence relating to Mark; most probably this was preceded by a discussion of the Old Testament Books, and what has come down to us is perhaps scarcely a third of the whole list of Holy Scriptures which it contained. Many still deny that what we have is a translation from a Greek original; but so much is certain: the treatise was written about 200, rather a decade earlier than later; and the author (about whose name it is useless to trouble ourselves) stood, in some connection at least, with the Roman church. For instance, he says of the 'Shepherd' of Hermas ³ that it was 'written by Hermas quite a short time ago, in our days, in the city of Rome, when his brother, Bishop Pius, sat in the Chair of the church at Rome.' At a distance men would scarcely have reckoned by the dates of Roman bishops—and even if we consider that the words 'nuperrime nostris temporibus,' were intended to mark the contrast with the Apostolic times, we cannot allow too great an interval between the Pontificate of Pius (c. 140–155) and the date of our fragment. Now this Roman included in his Canon Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, though the section referring to Matthew is now wanting. The Gospels form one group for discussion by themselves; then follow 'Acta omnium Apostolorum sub uno libro scripta,' the Pauline Epistles (nine to the churches, and four to individuals), Jude, 1. and 2. John, the Apocalypse of John and the Apocalypse of Peter, to which indeed is added the remark that 'some of our brethren will not have it read in their churches.' 1. Peter can scarcely be absent from the list except by an oversight, perhaps that of a copyist; the fact that only two Epistles of John are mentioned, to some extent lends additional importance to the absence of quotations from 3. John in other authors,

¹ See the text in Preuschen, p. 459 above.

² † 1750.

³ Lines 73–80.

knowledge of these qualities depends on our knowledge of the motives which induced the Church just at that time to create a new Canon. Let us see whether the first witnesses to the Canon themselves possessed such a knowledge.

2. The author of the Muratorianum was not blind to certain differences between the Four Gospels, and does not pass over the fact that all the Evangelists could not report as eye-witnesses; but for the faith of believers he regarded these differences as of no consequence, since the great facts of the history of salvation were imparted fully in all of them, by the one authoritative spirit ('*uno ac principali spiritu declarata*'), and the contents of all, including Mark and Luke, were vouched for throughout by one or other of the Apostles. As regards John's Gospel, the fact that he had been induced to compose it by the wishes of his fellow disciples and bishops, and had undertaken it in consequence of a special revelation to Andrew, was a very welcome '*donum superadditum*.' Great weight is also laid on the self-testimony of the Apostle in the First Epistle (i. 1-4) where he speaks of himself as *visor*, *auditor* and *scriptor* of all the wonderful works of God. Luke, in the Acts, limited himself strictly to the narration of what came within his own experience; it was for this reason that he was silent, for instance, as to the martyrdom of Peter, and the journey of Paul to Spain. The Pauline Epistles, from 1. Corinthians to Romans, were addressed in the first instance to seven separate communities, but were intended for the Catholic Church scattered all over the world, just as John in the Apocalypse¹ used the number of the Seven Churches as a symbol of the perfect whole. The four Epistles to Philemon, Titus and Timothy could not be included in this category: they had been declared sacred in the Catholic Church, in spite of their private character, on account of their precepts as to ecclesiastical discipline. Pseudo-Pauline epistles, coloured by the doctrines of Marcion and others, could not be accepted in the Church any more than gall could be mingled with honey. Nothing whatever is said as to the contents or the status of the Catholic Epistles or the Apocalypse. The most interesting part, however, is the

¹ Chap. ii. fol.

discussion concerning Hermas. His work should certainly be *read* (this evidently does not mean *read aloud*, for there is now no distinction between *Anagnosis* in public worship¹ and canonisation; the Muratorianum only testifies that there was no doubt about the orthodoxy and usefulness of this 'Revelation'), but it must not be proclaimed before the people in church; there was no room for Hermas either among the Prophets, whose number had long been complete, or among the Apostles of the latter days, since he came long after the age of the Apostles. What the fragmentist adds² about the books of Valentine, about a new psalm-book of the Marcionites and the like, is only intended to draw a sharp distinction between the Canon of the Universal, the Catholic Church, and that which held canonical rank in other communities, Christian only in name.

How far the unknown author here sets forth his own ideas must remain uncertain: in any case, he is influenced by the desire, not only, by drawing up a list of Canonical books, to state the point of view of his community with regard to them, but also to defend that view and to advance reasons for the choice it had made. The attempt was not brilliantly successful, and it may be said of the Muratorianum that in it the principle followed by the Church in the establishment of the new Canon is represented as the very absence of principle. From the remarks about Hermas we may conclude—and this is at bottom the author's standpoint—that in his opinion only the writings of *Prophets and Apostles* could claim a reception by the Church; when he speaks of the Apostles 'of the last times,' when he applies the words '*completum numero*' to the Prophets, his qualifying phrases are levelled against the Montanists and their vaunts of the new Prophecy, and imply that the number of canonical books admitted of no increase; the Prophets to whom the Church listened were even older than the Apostles, who signified the *finis temporum*, the definite end. Consequently Apocalypses of Christian times were not accepted merely because their authors were prophets, but only if they were Apostles: hence the Apocalypses of John and Peter alone are admitted. The fundamental

¹ 'Legi in ecclesia.'

² Lines 81 fol.

condition for the admission of a document into the New Testament seems to be that it should be of Apostolic origin.

It was already well known, however, that many writings laid false claim to Apostolic rank, such as the pseudo-Pauline Epistles to Laodicea and Alexandria; nor was it historical criticism which established their spuriousness: their heretical contents betrayed them. And the Church, naturally, would not tolerate pseudo-Apostolic writings. But how then could she approve of the pseudo- 'Wisdom of Solomon'? True, there was nothing to object to in its contents, no taint of Marcionite poison; but if the contents and not the person of the writer were to set the standard, the whole argument concerning the orthodox Hermas, who was perhaps a friend of Paul—a man of the Apostolic times—falls to the ground. Again, Luke, the Acts and Mark are actually counted among the Holy Scriptures, although the author in each case was not an Apostle, not even an eye-witness for the contents of the Gospel, but only a collector from unknown sources (*prout assequi potuit*). And, on the other hand, the equation Apostolic=Canonical appears not yet to be a matter of course with the author of the Muratorianum. This writer can only justify the reception through the whole Catholic Church of epistles written by Paul to individual communities by a piece of half arithmetical, half theosophical juggling; still less, then, could the letters of the Apostle addressed to individual persons belong to the Church, save for the fact that their contents referred to matters of ecclesiastical organisation. Private utterances of an Apostle, therefore, had nothing to do with the Canon. But again, did not Luke dedicate the Acts to the most excellent Theophilus, as Paul had dedicated an epistle to Philemon? And as far as the knowledge of the Muratorianum goes, the Apocalypse of Peter was not attacked as non-Apostolic; yet, in spite of this, many Catholics refused to have it read aloud in their churches. How, then, do these *Apostoli in finem temporum*, who stand beside the ancient Prophets, look now? A motley gathering: Apostles and their disciples, writings addressed to the world and to individuals; while, on the other hand, books bearing an unimpeachable Apostolic stamp are left, perhaps, outside the Canon.

3. The same result is obtained by a study of the writings of well-known Doctors of the Church, such as Irenæus, Tertullian and Clement, who were contemporary with the Muratorianum. The Church is founded on the Apostles, and through the unbroken succession of her bishops (this is a favourite idea in the Western Church) her inheritance is preserved from corruption: she scarcely needed a written Canon when she possessed so unassailable a tradition; but it was well that a comparison of the teaching and ordinances of the Church with the records of Apostolic preaching should demonstrate the identity of the original with the later Christianity. It was the Apostles who connected the Church with Christ; their works were the guarantee for the Christianity—that is to say, the Divinity—of all that pertained to the Church. It had long been impossible to imagine any antagonism between the Apostles, just as it would have been impossible to conceive an antagonism between a saying of Christ and a saying of an Apostle. The Apostles being dead, they had left behind them in their writings a substitute for oral preaching, as the foundation and corner-stone of the faith. The Spirit of God, which dwelt continually in those Apostles endowed with the *potestas evangelii*, spoke in their writings, and these, therefore, contained the unerring truth, whether they told the story of Jesus, or warned the flock against false doctrine, or gave counsel as to the ordering of the Church. Such a chain of thought is familiar to all the Fathers of the Church from Irenæus onwards; we might therefore expect the idea: as all that the Prophets wrote forms the Old Testament, so all that the Apostles left behind them in writing forms the compass of the New. But no: we do not attain to so clear and uniform a definition of the qualities which fitted a book for admission into the Canon; now it seems to be the absolute trustworthiness of an eye-witness, or even of the disciple of such a one; now a specific Apostolic charisma, with which, however, Mark and Luke could not properly be credited; now—in order to satisfy possible doubts—a complete agreement with the universally acknowledged tradition. The question as to whether the Canon included everything recorded by the Apostles, and whether all was made equal use of, the

compilers did not even venture to raise, while writings of obviously later origin, such as *Hermas* at least, are treated with almost the same reverence as the Apostolic. Hence it follows that all reasoning as to the conditions of canonisation—the statement of principle—only came later, when the object which was to be defined was already in being; it was not till men already possessed a New Testament that they began to consider why they had it in precisely that form. The Church created the new Canon *unconsciously*, not according to any principles. Indeed, one might even say that it was shaped in that state of super-consciousness in which all the fruits of genius grow and ripen, nor can we expect to be admitted into the secret workings of this creation by the teachers of the Church. None of the men of that time could have told us why the New Testament made its appearance just then, with such rapidity and in that particular form, or rather compass; for they never suspected the part that they played themselves in the great onward movement, and at the best only made fair terms with the accomplished fact; we, surveying all the factors concerned from the vantage-ground of distance, can solve the enigma more accurately than they.

4. A new religion, such as, in spite of its close connection with the Old Testament, Christianity was, could not be permanently content with the Canon of the old religion—which, moreover, it could have dispensed with more easily at first than later. Some witness to its own spirit, some record of the new covenant, some authentic revelation of perfect piety was needed, if only to derive from it the real Christian interpretation of the old 'Scriptures,' or to attest them anew. Such a necessity is usually most pressing when religious fertility begins to fail. So long as men had Jesus and his Apostles, so long as in every community there were prophets and teachers to picture the Kingdom of Heaven and to repeat the Gospel, no one thought of such things as New Testament Books; when the first enthusiasm was over, when speakers were often lacking, and there were none whose authority in questions of life and learning¹ could be considered in-

¹ See 1. Clem.

contestable, on whom the Spirit of God undoubtedly rested—then compensation was sought in the fragments remaining from an earlier and a richer time. The more keen the feeling of the present poverty, the stronger would be the inclination to idealise the past, to retain at least what still remained in written form of the treasures of that earlier generation, to judge everything new by those treasures, and to raise them to the position of a standard—a Canon. If men perceived that they received a keener stimulus, a quicker kindling of faith and hope, from these early Christian writings than even from the songs of David or the eloquence of Isaiah—not to mention the poor rhetoric of the contemporary teachers—it followed inevitably that the 'new' books should be ranked with the 'old.' There is some truth in the saying that the hymn-book is the Bible of the common people; at certain times and in certain circles the religious life of the world has in truth been far more strongly influenced by Luther's writings, by the 'Augustana,' by Spener's and Scriver's edifying works, or by Irving's tractates, than by all the Books of the Bible put together: they, too, might have been canonised and declared sacred, if a dogma had not stood in the way, the dogma—maintained by the very men who received such enthusiastic veneration—of the sole authority of the Old and New Testaments. Now, the Lutherans of about 1650, or a genuine pietist of 1760, or even an enthusiast of to-day, can forego the canonisation of their favourite books, because they are convinced that these books only paraphrase the contents of the Bible, that it is there that they will find the *truth* and the *Lord*, on whom all depends; but in 150 it would have been very much more difficult for a Christian to console himself with the Old Testament. Only by means of the artifices of a trained exegesis did the theologian find all that the era of fulfilment had brought, foretold and pre-figured in the Old Testament; for the multitude this nourishment was not sufficient: they did not wish to dig and delve, but to see and hear. And the richer in thought a religion is—the more it lays claim to a perfect grasp of the truth—the more indispensable it is, as soon as the substance of this truth is fixed and systematised in detail, to possess

what is peculiar to it in unequivocal, norm-giving records; a Christian Church permanently satisfied with the sacred books of Judaism would have been a monstrosity in the history of religion.

To ask when the establishment of a Canon was first thought of, is to ask when the need for authority, the feeling of dependence on those who went before, outweighed the first fresh consciousness of power: that this point is almost reached as early as the second generation after the Apostles does not seem to me at all astonishing, considering the spread of the new faith in districts which were sometimes not in the least prepared for it; nor must the influence which Gnosticism and Montanism had upon the process be exaggerated. Naturally, a religious community that has to pass through great internal confusion has much more need to prove its rights by what may be called legal means, by documents which even its opponents must recognise, than a Church that lives in peace and unity; and since only God can decide in matters of religion, every document must be traced back to God. But such strife would not have been spared the Christian Church even without Gnosticism and the Phrygian prophets. If there had never been a Gnostic, the Christian books for public reading of about the year 100 would probably have become sacred before 200, sharing the infallibility of the Old Testament, because both the feelings of the layman and the brain of the theologian in reality placed the former before the latter. The dispute between the Church and the Gnostics had only the special effect of making the former more careful in the business of changing her favourite writings into Divine Books, and of confining her very soon to those which were absolutely unassailable and especially fitted to form the foundation of doctrine; that between the Church and Montanism resulted in an imperative demand for the one true mark of the primitive—i.e. Apostolic origin—and in a withdrawal of favour from books of an apocalyptic character. It is true that another interest worked in the same direction, that of the defenders of the new faith before the State and Gentile culture. It can be no mere chance that the first trace of a New Testament appears, of all writers, in Justin, the Apologist of Christianity before

the Emperor and the Senate. The man who sought to teach the jealous enemies of the new religion what it and its aims actually were, could not refer them to Jewish books alone as the final sources of knowledge, nor, on the other hand, to all that had ever been written under the banner of Christianity, for that would have been to give away his own cause, especially at a time when Gnosticism was flourishing. It was therefore the best policy to bring forward very little as authentic, but that little such as every Christian must be proud of, and such as stood in immediate relationship with the highest Christian authorities.

5. Thus the stage of sanctification followed that of regular reading in the services of the Church, and how the transition between these two conceptions was brought about we can easily perceive from the Muratorianum. But surely, not all the books thus used from the beginning finally passed into the Canon? On this point it is usual to speak of a great process of separation, which, when certain favourite Christian writings were canonised, crowded out a great number of others from the Church--devoured, as it were, a host of victims. There is some truth in this, but it borders on exaggeration. When the new Canon grew up within the Church from the year 140 onwards, the Church trod down many a flower growing closely around it, in order to complete the process of enclosure. A similar process had, however, gone on before, when the books for public reading were handed on from one community to another, and a decision had to be made for or against any book that was proffered; for most communities the formation of the New Testament certainly meant an increase rather than a diminution of their material for religious instruction. Poverty itself had preserved them from obtaining all available Christian writings for their services, and even at a much later date there were many churches well aware of the extent of the new Canon, but not possessing copies of all the New Testament Books. No considerable reduction was undertaken in the number of the original reading-books, and the efforts necessary, after the recognition of a new Canon, to enforce the utmost uniformity as to its contents in all communities, had long ago--and likewise mainly through processes of completion

and enrichment—been prepared for by the removal, through the lively intercourse maintained between the communities, of the most conspicuous differences in their usage. The irregularity of the boundary lines in the New Testament is not to be denied—in the Old Testament it needs no explanation, for there *all* the remains of Hebrew national literature were collected, while the New Testament represents a selection,—but it is to be explained by the fact that selection did not mean the rigorous exclusion of everything not answering to a fixed standard; on the contrary, practically everything which had already been established and approved was maintained, and only those parts let go which absolutely could not be retained longer. In my opinion, the selective process on the part of the Church did not take place—or did so at least to a very limited extent—contemporaneously with the process of forming the Canon. The rejection and admission of writings went on chiefly at the time when the primitive form of our New Testament did not yet exist. The unconscious action of the canonisers was not guided by the motto ‘As little as possible,’ but by that of ‘If possible, all’ of that which had been used for edification in the worship of the Church.

As far as we may venture to judge, the Church admitted into its new Canon only the best of its religious literature; what we know of the non-Canonical Gospels—we need only indicate the newly discovered Gospel of Peter—with their romantic fancies and their pompous, dogmatic tone, cannot be compared with the Canonical Gospels in their sublime simplicity; and the Histories of the Apostles (such as the Acts of Paul) which followed Luke’s are in proportion almost more pitiful. What a contrast, too, between the prolixity of the First Epistle of Clement, or the theological arguments of the Epistle of Barnabas, and the directness both of religious feeling and expression in the Epistles of Paul, in 1. Peter and 1. John! Indeed, the tact with which the early Church went to work in creating the New Testament was on the whole astonishing; she could not have demonstrated her fitness for such a task more brilliantly; but our admiration is due in a still higher degree to that older Church which chose the books for public reading, and left little room beside them

or less valuable productions. The work of the 'many' who wrote Gospels besides Mark and Matthew was not destroyed by an act of violence when the new Canon arose; it had been generally approved of in but few communities, for no Apocryphal Gospel can be proved to have enjoyed any considerable circulation. No doubt the attempt was made to maintain some of them, but they could not long hold their ground in most places beside one or other of those which afterwards became the Four Gospels *par excellence*. A change of taste in the Church must be admitted in the case of apocalypses only, though it must not be explained solely by an anti-Montanistic tendency. To the claims of higher culture this class of writing, most examples of which merely contained Jewish prophecies in a more or less Christian dress, appeared flat and vulgar, and only provoked sharp criticism. But otherwise the makers of the New Testament Canon did not work in a radical spirit, for they merely changed the already high authority of the approved books into the highest of all.

The natural consequence of this was a growing mistrust of local peculiarities; the question as to whether a certain document were Divine or not could not now be left, like that of its fitness or unfitness for public reading, to the decision of individual communities; the tendency towards uniformity was necessarily strengthened. But in order to convince a neighbouring community unwilling to give up doubtful customs it was necessary to have some reasons; these, again, required reflection as to the advantages of the right books over the wrong in use elsewhere; but not till the next period did such reasoning attain any important influence on the history of the Canon; *the original Canon was essentially a codification and legalisation of the material handed down by tradition*. After a while the Christian literature that in the last decades had served on Sundays for the edification of the leading communities—where, as we have seen, the new Canon arose in two main divisions—was treated as Divine Scripture, and designated as such; and the other communities, already prepared for the most part to follow the example of the greater, were induced, with more or less rapid success, to join them in this practice. There was never a time, however, in the history

of the Books of the New Testament, when individual concessions were not made to considerations of policy. Hermas, for instance, could be given up (as in the Muratorianum), although he had till then been read in the churches as frequently as the Apocalypse. His existence in the Canon made it too difficult to exclude other dangerous writings which forced themselves forward—though Irenæus, Tertullian and Clement did not so much as perceive this difficulty.

6. Let us now attempt to present a definite outline of the rise of our Canon in the first and second centuries.

In the eyes of believers 'The Lord' and his word were from the first the ultimate Court of Appeal. Most men, it is true, had knowledge of him only from the narratives of others, and the corruption which was to be feared from this method of propagation was avoided from about 65 onwards by the preservation in writing of his most important sayings. Before long the number of those who had received the words of Jesus directly from his actual hearers grew less and less, but Papias, assisted by his age, his good fortune, his numerous connections with the centres of Christian life and his industry in collection, was successful in making many a valuable discovery unattained by those who possessed written Gospels. Most of the communities of that period would have learnt very little about Jesus if they had followed Papias's example in preferring oral to written tradition; if the latter had been strictly excluded they would scarcely have known more than we should now know of the Seven Years' War if no written records of it existed. The only course open to them was to read aloud the history of the Lord from the writings of Matthew, Mark, or any other writer available. At first a distinction was drawn clearly enough between the 'most holy Word' of the Son of God, which was there preserved in writing, and the additions of those who reported that Word; but it was impossible to apportion accurately the different degrees of reverence due to what was read, according as it was the Lord or the Evangelist who spoke. As soon as the *written* word of Jesus had assumed the holiest place, its honours must soon be shared by the documents which contained it. In the long run it was impossible to keep the book and its contents separate,

them became more lively, in part because their readers were convinced that with their help they could beat back all the attacks of heresy, and saw the historical foundations of the Catholic Church secured by them against the subjectivity of Gnosticism and Montanism. Step by step—though there exists no evidence of this—they rose to a higher place in the Anagnosis, until at last all memory had faded away of a distinction between the Evangelistic reading-books which had reached Canonical dignity and the writings of the Apostles. And now another compromise is made between reason and tradition; the popular Book of Acts is retained, in spite of the fact that it was not written by an Apostle—but it dealt, after all, with the words and actions of Apostles—and in many instances *Hermas*, 1. *Clement* and others of the same kind also keep their place, having long been widely known in close connection with the Apostolic writings. The ‘Apostolicum’ was, in fact, a plant of spontaneous growth, and not the deliberate product of a Parliamentary Commission. Even if we had no data to go upon, we should not have allowed more than from thirty to fifty years for the transformation of the Gospel Canon into the Canon of all the Apostolic writings. The first generation of those who from their youth up had heard the history and letters of the Apostles regularly read aloud in the worship of the Church, side by side with their Gospels, who were, moreover, constantly referred in the sermons they heard to the Apostles, as the representatives of Christ, the founders and leaders of the Church, must have overthrown the barrier which separated the Gospels from the writings of the Apostles. Marcion the Gnostic had instantly drawn the inference that the writings of Paul, the man who stood surety for the genuine Gospel of Jesus, could not be treated as of less account than the Gospel itself; in the Church at large it was but a little longer before this inference was also drawn. Which community first felt the necessity of so doing will never be determined; it is certain that the Roman Church, with its wide-spread importance and its liking for settled forms and fixed authority, was one of the first to be concerned in it.

We can attempt no more than an imaginary reconstruction of the first decisive epoch of the history of the New

Testament Canon ; but it ought to satisfy the facts we possess and the demands of internal probability. And from this point onwards the march of events is clear. The process of canonisation could not be renewed after another fifty years in favour of post-apostolic literature, and so on again and again, for at the same time that the Church proclaimed the original form of the new Canon, she proclaimed her earliest dogma, that of the unique quality of the Apostolic charisma, which must for ever bar the approach to productions of later times. 'The Prophets and the Apostles' was the watchword of the old Catholic Church ; to them all truth was revealed, and they had seen to it that in their writings it should be imparted whole and unimpaired to later generations. A Church could not recognise *new* truths ; in her eyes no man of later times could be more highly gifted than her founders ; it would, moreover, be doing them shameful injustice to believe that they had kept back from their Church any portion of the truth they possessed. So the Church of the year 200 already stood fast in the sufficiency of the revelation manifested in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, in the Gospels, and in the writings of the Apostles. From that time forward there was but one task left : to do away with the differences which were known to exist in the wide circle of the Church regarding the number of the new Canonical Books, and to carry the 'Apostolicum' to such a point that all writings left by the Apostles should really be included in it in their entirety, and all that was not Apostolic should be removed, even at the cost of well-established custom. Henceforward the work advances consciously in both directions. Reason founded on principle takes this important province into its own hands ; it sets in order the spontaneous growth of former times ; and it follows that the services it renders to the Canon are scarcely less momentous than those rendered by the labours of the two preceding periods.

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON DOWN TO
THE TIME WHEN IT TOOK ITS PRESENT SHAPE§ 39. *The New Testament of the Greek Church from
c. 200 to c. 330*

1. It has already been shown that Clement, the representative of the Eastern Church of about 200, had less hesitation than his Roman and African contemporaries in granting admission within the limits of the new Holy Scriptures: this lack of definite rule in the matter of the Canon is typical of the Greek Church down to the time of Athanasius. The Alogi of Asia Minor, with their determined criticism of all the writings of John, were afterwards naturally considered heretics; but the majority of contemporary Christians did not look upon them as enemies of the Church because of their dissent in questions of the Canon. Indeed, a Roman theologian of repute named Caius, who wrote in Greek and flourished early in the third century,¹ ventured on a similar criticism, in his wrath at the Montanists' assiduous preparation of 'new Scriptures,' by simply declaring the favourite book of those enthusiasts, the Apocalypse, to be an impudent forgery of the arch-heretic Cerinthus.² The name of John indeed is not mentioned in the observations of Caius which Eusebius has preserved³: he only speaks of a great Apostle who was falsely asserted to be the recipient of this angelic revelation, but as the description of the contents corresponds exactly with our Apocalypse, and as Eusebius, who had the context before him, refers it to this, we cannot doubt that it was this which Caius attacked as a non-Apostolic book, with no claim to Divinity, and therefore uncanonical. This

¹ Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* VI. xx. 3; λογιώτατος ἀνὴρ.² See p. 277.³ *Hist. Eccles.* III. xxviii. 2.

supposition is confirmed by the fragments of a controversial writing of Hippolytus against Caius (preserved in Syriac), in which the latter's objections to portions of the Apocalypse, such as viii. 8, 12, ix. 15 etc., are brought forward and refuted. There were thus some within the Church who were already beginning to object to the chiliasm and the sensuous expectations of the Apocalypse, and as they considered their own convictions necessarily identical with the revelation of God, they drew the conclusion that a work which contradicted these convictions could only have been surreptitiously conveyed into a collection of sacred books.

Their protest is no proof that a Canon containing the Apocalypse was not in existence at that time, but only that it had not been in existence long enough, nor in a sufficiently settled form, to make any correction of it appear monstrous. The Canon was still visibly growing in one direction: then it must also be permissible, on the ground of better information, to cut it down in another. Books with heterodox contents were, of course, excluded everywhere. Thus about the year 200, Bishop Serapion of Antioch prohibited the use of the Gospel of Peter in the community of Rhossus, as soon as he heard that dangerous doctrines were there encouraged by it. His conduct¹ in the matter is most characteristic. On a former visit of his to Rhossus he had conferred the favour on its church (which he found standing firm in the true faith) of permitting it to read the Gospel of Peter, till then unknown to him, in its services: whether as well as the four Canonical Gospels, or instead of one of them, he does not say. Soon afterwards heresy broke out in Rhossus; the Gospel of Peter was appealed to on behalf of Docetism; Serapion examined it, found some parts of it to be false and rejected it peremptorily as a forgery (*ψευδεπιγραφόν*)—as though he could have thought it genuine before without at once procuring so great a treasure for his own use and introducing it to his other churches! But a clear distinction between *historical* judgment as to the spuriousness of a book professing to be Apostolic,

¹ Described according to his own account of it in Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* VI. xii. 2-6.

and *dogmatic* judgment as to heretical elements in its contents, was quite beyond the powers of the early Church. The name 'Pseudepigraph' always indicates both—a rejection from historic as well as dogmatic motives. This amalgamation of the two points of view will soon take place more definitely and with more serious consequences. What was accidentally set aside in Rhossus had probably been read with reverence for some time in other communities, and naturally the Gospel of *Peter* had not taken a lower place than that of Matthew or Mark. But not only the Gospel of Peter had enjoyed such distinction. The 'Shepherd' of Hermas was treated by practically all the Greek theologians of the third century who had occasion to use it as a canonical document. Methodius of Olympus,¹ the greatest ecclesiastical teacher of the opposite school to Origen, included in his Canon the Apocalypse of Peter, and perhaps also the Epistle of Barnabas and the 'Teaching of the Apostles'; and we may conclude from the remarkably keen interest shown, for instance, by Eusebius, in the definite exclusion of certain books from the canonical sphere, that in his neighbourhood the Church had not yet attained complete success in its efforts to eject troublesome appendages from the Canon.

2. And yet the Greek Church possessed, between 200 and 330, a teacher *κατ' ἐξοχήν*; both in quality and quantity her greatest writer is *Origen* († 254), the head of the Alexandrian school. His position with regard to the new Canon must be examined on account of his extraordinary influence.² Unfortunately, an element of difficulty attends such an examination, owing to the fact that a considerable part of his work is altogether lost, and another part is only preserved in Latin translations,³ which cannot by any means be called literal. For this indefatigable writer, who represented the Eastern Church of about 250, was condemned as a heretic in the sixth century by that very Church, and it is only in few and scattered fragments that she has preserved his works for herself and after times. Nevertheless, there is no doubt as to the principal points.

¹ c. 300.

² Some material in Preuschen; see above, p. 459.

³ Of Jerome and Rufinus.

(a) Origen knows no distinction of value within the limits of the Holy Scriptures between the old and the new; he comments on the new—on Matthew, John and Romans—in the same manner as on Exodus and Leviticus, with the same presumption in either case, that he has before him inspired books, full of unerring truth, and with the same methods of treatment. In argument he is quite indifferent as to whether his citations come from the Old or the New Testament. One sentence from his Commentary on Matt. xiii. 52¹ may serve as a proof of this: ‘We must study the law of the Lord day and night, and not only the new decrees of the *Gospels*, and the *Apostles*, and their revelation, but also the old decrees to be found in the Law, which foreshadowed the good things to come, and the Prophets who prophesied of these things.’ A passage from his Commentary on John (tom. v.) received in the ‘*Philocalia*’ the apposite heading, ‘That all inspired Scripture forms a single book.’ Further, he finds support for the unity of the divine book (τὸ ἐνικὸν τῆς θείας βίβλου) in passages such as Rev. v. 1 fol. and x. 10; for him it is from beginning to end the Book of Life. Yet he does not deny the difference between Old and New: he admits that the one offers shadow and prophecy, the other fulfilment and revelation—though such a proposition agrees but ill with his method of interpretation, which regards everything in the Bible as possessing a double meaning, a plain and a secret text. But even the name ‘New Testament’ for the sum of the new books as opposed to the Old (ἡ καινὴ and ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη) is already a familiar phrase with Origen, and in the course of the next century becomes established in the whole Church, with the name of ‘*Novum Testamentum*’ in the Latin branch. In the New Testament, again, he makes a clear division between Gospels and Apostolic writings, as in the Old Testament between the Law and the Prophets, for to him ‘the Revelation of the Apostles’ is not the title of a single book, but an honourable appellation for everything, excepting the Gospels, left by the Apostles.

(b) But which books did Origen include in his New Testament? The sacred number of the Four Gospels was considered

¹ Tom. x. 15.

question was clear to him, clearer than to most other men, since his immense literary knowledge made him aware how much useless stuff was current under the Apostolic ægis. But, unfortunately, he was too modest to dictate the decision; in the end he was satisfied with recording the facts in statistical form. The idea of making out different classes of 'Evangelico-Apostolic' books originated with him, not that he wished to keep them permanently in these classes, but only to give the results of his researches into the state of the question. In the case of all writings which came under his consideration, whether as to their titles or their contents, the reader, or the community, might learn from him whether they were definitely accepted, formally rejected, or still debateable—that is to say, whether the churches took up a varying position with regard to them. The first class includes those which are *universally recognised* (ἀναντίρρητα, ὁμολογούμενα)—the four Gospels, the Acts, the Apocalypse (!), 1. Peter, 1. John, the Pauline Epistles—and of these, by strict right, only thirteen. Origen knew that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not universally recognised as Pauline, or as Apostolic, but his own inclination made him advocate the unreserved addition of this Epistle to the others; he never called it expressly one of the Homologumena, but treated it practically as such. (2) As *false* (ψευδῆ) are reckoned the Gospel according to the Egyptians, that of the Twelve, above all that Κατὰ Βασιλείδην, and all that the heretics had forged under the names of Gospels or Apostles. Between these two stands Class 3, the doubtful writings (ἀμφιβαλλόμενα): 2. Peter, 2. and 3. John—probably also James and Jude (and Hermas?)—those whose genuineness, whose Apostolic authorship, was doubtful (οὐ πάντες φασὶ γνησίους εἶναι ταύτας).

3. This classification met with the entire approbation of Eusebius, the famous ecclesiastical historian and true follower of Origen, who stood at the turning-point between two epochs, and studied the history of the New Testament Canon with peculiar interest, as far as a learned Christian of that time could study it. In § III. xxv. of his principal work he summed up the total results of his researches—probably not without a secret desire in some degree to influence public opinion upon the

question of the Canon [Text in Preuschen, see p. 459]. Here he aims at giving a catalogue of the 'Scriptures of the New Testament.' In the first place there were the four Gospels, then the Acts, the Pauline Epistles (whether thirteen or fourteen was left doubtful, as with Origen—but according to III. iii. 5 Eusebius thought fourteen), lastly 1. John and 1. Peter, and 'if it seems good' (εἰ γε φανεῖν) the Apocalypse also. These books are universally recognised, and recognised moreover as Divine Scriptures.¹ On the other hand, the Epistles of James and Jude, 2. Peter, and 2. and 3. John are disputed (ἀντιλεγόμενα), it being uncertain whether these last were written by the Evangelist or by another John. Also to be numbered among the not genuine (νόθα)² are the Acts of Paul, Hermas, the Apocalypse of Peter, Barnabas, the 'Teaching of the Apostles'; lastly, if desired, the Apocalypse of John and the Gospel according to the Hebrews. The extraordinary fact that Eusebius could count the same Apocalypse among the universally recognised and the contested books is only comprehensible when we remember his dependence on Origen, who counted it among the Homologumena. But Eusebius knew that some rejected it, or denied that it was written by the Apostle, and therefore, for his part, he felt obliged to count it among the Antilegomena, where the Gospel according to the Hebrews might at best find a place. The New Testament in the strictest sense was composed of those Scriptures which, according to the tradition of the Church, were true, uncorrupted and universally recognised (twenty-one documents, or according to Origen, who included the Apocalypse, twenty-two). The Antilegomena no longer formed part of the New Testament—that is to say, of the absolutely certain norm of Christian faith³—but were, nevertheless, well known to very many ecclesiastical writers, and had, at any rate, nothing at all in common with the Gospels produced by heretics, such as those of Peter, Thomas, and Matthias, or with Acts of the Apostles such as those of Andrew, John, &c., which had never been thought worthy of mention by one of the authorities of the Church, and which alike in style and contents

¹ III. iii. 7.² Hence νοθεύειν, to set aside in this category.³ οὐκ ἐνδιόθηκοι.

were far removed from the Apostolic standard. They were to be avoided as 'quite perverted and godless' (*ὡς ἄτοπα πάντη καὶ δυσσεβῇ παραιτητέον*).

As Eusebius makes isolated remarks on this subject in other parts of his 'Ecclesiastical History,' and in doing so changes his class-titles, his classification has given rise to much controversy. But we may regard it as settled that after careful proof he considered that the collective body of *documents which had any claim whatever to be called sacred* fell into three classes: the undoubtedly Apostolic (21), the Antilegomena, and the Anti-Apostolic, which in III. xxxi. 6 he calls entirely spurious (*παντελῶς νόθα*). There was no doubt as to the books belonging to the third class; the distinction between Classes I. and II. he drew, not according to the results of historical criticism, but by counting the authorities for or against. What was unanimously accepted by all belonged to the first class; what only a part admitted belonged to the second. The statistician is here surrounded by obscurity and confusion. He says of the Epistle to the Hebrews¹ that it was not recognised as an Epistle of Paul by the Roman churches, but yet it does not occur to him to include it among the Antilegomena. Again, the Apocalypse of Peter stands in one place² among the Antilegomena (that is, among the much used and quoted writings), even before the Apocalypse of John; in another³ it is said to be unknown in Catholic communities and not quoted by any ecclesiastical writer. Further, the authorities of Eusebius were sometimes the churches,⁴ sometimes the ecclesiastical writers (especially those of old time), and once he expressly assures us⁵ that he intends to state in a later page which of the ecclesiastical writers of different times made use of Antilegomena, and of how many of these, as well as what they said about the universally recognised Scriptures and about those which were not so recognised. The opinions of *churches* he knew only from his own experience; those of individual writers he gathered from widely differing periods, and a combination of

¹ III. iii. 5.

² III. iii. 2.

³ III. iii. 3.

⁴ III. xxv. 4 (cf. VI. xiv. 1).

⁵ II. xxiii. 25; III. iii. 6; XVI. xxxi. 6.

the two was bound to give a perverted image. If the churches of his day were unanimous in accepting what certain writers 150 years before had contested, must the book in question nevertheless be counted among the Antilegomena to all eternity? Was it possible, on the other hand, to maintain a class of books which by some authorities were counted among the Divine, but not by others? For the one party did not merely reckon as 'useful' what the other ignored, but treated it exactly as they did the other Scriptures (μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἐσπουδάσθη γραφῶν); for instance, they 'published' the Epistles of James and Jude together with the other Epistles (καὶ ταύτας μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν ἐν πλείσταις δεδημοσιευμένας ἐκκλησίαις); and was the fact of not being mentioned to be taken as a denial of the book? Must a thing be known everywhere and always if it was to be considered trustworthy?

But Eusebius is most unfortunate of all in his terminology. He asserts¹ that of all the writings bearing the name of Peter, he knows but one single Epistle which is genuine and recognised by the Fathers; thus Class I. actually receives the title of 'genuine'; but if Class III. bears the designation 'absolutely spurious,' Class II. must lie between the perfectly genuine and the absolutely spurious; and as a matter of fact, Eusebius uses for it the term 'spurious' (νόθα). For the context of the principal passage, III. xxv. 3-6, forbids us to accept a division of the second class into two sections—one containing such books as merely took the title of the whole class (Antilegomena), and the other those which might also be called 'spurious'; and if Peter left only one genuine document behind him, what could the other writings of Peter be but spurious? And is it of 'spurious writings' that we are again and again assured that they belonged to the public possession of most of the communities? Here again Eusebius can only be understood through Origen, who, in making an incidental use of the 'Kerygma Petri,' says that he would not at the moment argue whether the book were genuine, spurious or mixed (γνήσιον ἢ νόθον ἢ μικτόν). In my opinion, we have no right to identify these three words unreservedly

¹ III. iii. 4.

with the headings used in Origen's classification; it by no means follows from this that Origen had drawn up a class of 'mixed' writings identical with his *Amphiballomena*, while Eusebius, by an oversight, included 'spurious' with 'mixed.' Origen is there considering—very reasonably too, and only in the case of the 'Preaching of Peter'—that there exist three possibilities: (1) that the document was really derived wholly and entirely from the Apostle Peter, in which case it would be 'genuine'; (2) that it had only been falsely attributed to him, in which case it would be 'spurious'; and (3) that it contained much that was really Peter's, but interspersed with the thoughts of a later writer, in which case it must be called 'mixed.' Origen knew perfectly well that it did not belong to the *Homologumena*: if, nevertheless, he leaves open the possibility of its genuineness, this shows that he does not consider 'genuine' and 'universally recognised' to be identical ideas. It was a serious mistake on the part of Eusebius if he identified 'genuine' with 'recognised' through an imperfect remembrance of Origen; for the former involves a personal judgment: the latter is the result of a statistical inquiry. When (in this case logically) he describes the writings of his second class—no longer genuine, though much esteemed as reading-books for the churches—as *spurious*, he weakens the sense of the word in his own mind to mean *not undisputedly genuine* (*νόθα*=books of an *ἀντιλεγόμενη γνησιότης*).

The fact is that in the case of many of these books it was not their genuineness in a literary and historical sense which was called in question (e.g. in the case of 1. Clement,¹ Hermas and Barnabas); still less was it their genuineness in a dogmatic sense, for those writings which were false and deceitful in that sense of course composed the third class. It was only their right of belonging to the Canon that was objected to, and chiefly on the ground of established custom. Certainly as regards writings with an Apostolic title, it was only possible to contest them—when once the whole Church had become thoroughly imbued with the idea that the only condition of Canonicity was that of Apostolic origin—by demonstrating their spuriousness in a literary sense. On

¹ VI. xiii. 6.

this point the Church must be clear; the question could not remain undecided as to whether a certain work were of Apostolic origin or only falsely attributed to an Apostle, and thus the Apostolic writings termed 'spurious' by Eusebius—perhaps this unendurable epithet helped to hasten the decision—were obliged to range themselves either with the first or the third class. Either it was found possible to believe in their Apostolic origin, in which case every protest must cease, and the documents be received into the Canon of the 'most genuine' (this is the result in the case of the five later Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse); or the decision was given against them, and then the partial esteem which they had formerly enjoyed tended precisely to destroy their reputation, and they were called godless and lying: this was the fate of the Gospels of the Hebrews and of Peter, the Acts of Paul, the Apocalypse of Peter, and so on. That this process had already begun in the time of Eusebius is shown by the fact that he never expressly uses the term 'spurious' for the five Catholic Epistles; they stand high up in the second class, and he takes a breath, as it were, before going on to the other books of the same class; it is not without intention, moreover, that he places the Apocalypse of John rather low down in the second list.

4. If Eusebius had not yielded very decidedly to his own learned proclivities in his labours and writings upon the history of the Canon, a very different picture of the position of the New Testament in the Greek Church of his time would probably have resulted. He himself scarcely knew several of the Antilegomena about which he discourses so eagerly. The Greek Church of his time acknowledged (besides the four Gospels) the Acts, fourteen Pauline Epistles—the number fourteen was only contested among the Latins—and seven Catholic Epistles. Theologians were still aware that the majority of these seven Epistles had only recently won their way to general esteem; but as far as the Church was concerned, the distinction between them was already smoothed away; she possessed a collection of seven Epistles for which she had even invented a special name, that of the Catholic Epistles.¹ Eusebius bears witness to this (in II. xxiii. 25²), and as he had shortly

¹ See p. 201

² Cf. VI. xiv. 1.

efore mentioned the Epistle of James as the first of the so-called Catholic Epistles, there appears already to exist a settled order of precedence within this second Canon of Epistles. But then once James stands before 1. Peter in the manuscripts, it is at most a learned archaism to designate James as *οὐκ ὑδαθήκος*, while 1. Peter is included in the New Testament.

Thus the second part of the New Testament, which Origen called 'The Apostle,' is now for the Greek Christians just as complete as was the first part, 'The Gospels,' in the time of renæus. It is known which Epistles are to be honoured as apostolic. Edifying Epistles of other authors, such as the Epistle of Barnabas and the Epistles of Clement, were certainly still read aloud in public worship in many places, but as their authors did not speak as Apostles, and only the word of the Apostles was admitted into the Canon, there was no danger of their entering the New Testament; they had never stood among the newly arranged 'Catholic' Epistles, nor even beside the Pauline and the Catholic Epistles as a third division; they were treasured, but were not considered as a standard authority—not as 'The Lord.'

On the other hand, the situation is proportionately worse in the apocalyptic division of the 'Apostolicon.' Instead of the one Apocalypse of John which Origen accepted as a matter of course, some used several, and others would not tolerate any at all within the limits of the New Testament. Even if we had not the testimony of Methodius in favour of the Apocalypse of Peter, we might conclude from Eusebius that this book had enthusiastic partisans; even the non-apostolic Apocalypse of Hermas was not yet rejected from the list of church books; and there is no doubt that where an affection existed for these two books, the Apocalypse of John must have been held in still higher esteem. But the anti-apocalyptic movement, which first met us with the Alogi and Caius about the year 200, had meanwhile greatly increased. Origen was not aware that the Apocalypse of John had ever been contested: he appears to have read none of the attacks of Caius; but, considering the nature of his speculations, it is no matter for surprise that we soon find his school leading the opposition against this Apocalypse.

Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria (a follower of Origen), who died about the year 265, expressed himself, according to the *Ecclesiastica Historia* of Eusebius,¹ in the following terms on the Apocalypse:—Some of the early Christians utterly repudiated the book, and declared its title to be false [he can only have been thinking of learned criticism such as that of Caius], and its real author to be the heretic Cerinthus. He personally would not venture to repudiate a book so dear to many of the brethren, but he did not understand it. He did not measure it by his understanding, but accepted the fact that its contents were above his comprehension as a matter of faith.

However, his critical doubts led him still further. He made a very thorough comparison between the ideas, literary style and language of the Apocalypse and those of the Gospel and First Epistle of John (the Second and Third Epistles are once introduced too as letters of the Apostle, although separated noticeably from the two principal writings), and found it impossible to believe that one man was the author of them all. But, he continues, we need not believe that the author spoke falsely when he called himself John; there were many who bore the name of John—in Ephesus alone the monuments of two were shown—and so perhaps the Apocalypse might have been written, not by a heretic under a false name, but by some real John, some holy and inspired man. This compromise between critical suspicion and consideration for those who revered the book might satisfy Dionysius, but the Church could not be content with it. If the writer of the Apocalypse was no Apostle—and among the Apostles there was but one John—if it was impossible to prove at least a connection between him and the Apostles, as in the case of Mark and Luke, his work could not remain within the Canon. The motive power in the history of the Canon here comes out very clearly. The Apocalypse had a brilliant record as Holy Scripture on its side; even if its non-Apostolic authorship had been *proved*—which was not the case—a way would still have been discovered to retain it within the New Testament if only the right interest had been felt for it. But

¹ VII. xxv.

this was precisely lacking in many leaders of the Greek Church; because the contents of the book were extremely inconvenient to them, their eyes were opened to the discrepancies of form between it and the Gospel and Epistle. They did not *wish* to maintain its Apostolic origin, and therefore thought they were unable to do so, or rather found out that the thing was impossible. Thus the denial of the fact that it was Apostolic was the first step towards its exclusion from the New Testament. Eusebius himself belonged to those who did not consider the Apocalypse as *ἐνδιάθηκος*; at first it was not read in public worship only because it was too difficult of comprehension, but it was kept among the collections of church books. Once the congregations had grown unaccustomed to it, its critics applied more drastic measures, and either made a logical attack on its right to belong to the Canon or else ignored it altogether. About the year 325 there were certainly many Greek churches which believed themselves to possess complete New Testaments with only twenty-six Books—the same as those we recognise to-day, with the exception of the Apocalypse. Here and there it was probably quite unknown, although all kinds of appendages to the New Testament were affectionately cherished.

Thus in the Greek world, the advance to be noted in the history of the Canon between the period of Origen and that of Athanasius is, on the one hand, a securer welding together of the seven Catholic Epistles, and their attachment through tradition to the Pauline; on the other, an almost complete abandonment of the Apocalyptic literature of the New Testament.

§ 40. *The New Testament in the Latin Church from
c. 200 to c. 375*

1. In this section our limits may be extended a little farther, because the Latin Church did not reach a turning-point about the year 330, as did the Greek. The elevation of Christianity by Constantine to the position of a State-religion was not felt so much as in the East; the Church had at this

time no scholar like Eusebius, with his interest in the history of the Canon; nor did any remarkable general development take place before the last quarter of the fourth century; Jerome and Augustine, who died in 420 and 430 respectively, are, in the West, the first to indicate the beginning of the last epoch of our history.

2. The indefatigable Hippolytus, Bishop of a schismatical community in Rome (died about 220), represents scarcely any advance upon his teacher, Irenæus, in his view of the question of the Canon. The four Gospels, the Acts, and thirteen Epistles of Paul are included in his New Testament; and he wrote an impassioned defence of the Apocalypse against Caius. He was acquainted, moreover, with 1. Peter and 1. and 2. John, and also with Hebrews, while, since the discovery of his Commentary on Daniel,¹ 2. Peter is likewise placed beyond question; his acquaintance with James remains uncertain. But he never quotes Hebrews as an Epistle of Paul, nor 2. Peter as 'Scripture'; he alludes to them in the same way as to Hermas, the Acts and the Apocalypse of Peter and the Acts of Paul. The fragments of his writings which have come down to us do not, in fact, leave the impression that all this literature from which he occasionally borrows, possessed in his eyes the same authority as the Gospels or Revelation.

All else that has come down to us from Roman Christians of the third century gives the same result: the Gospels, Paul with thirteen Epistles, Revelation in very high esteem, Acts, 1. John, and 1. Peter enjoying equal consideration, but less often quoted; the rest felt only below the surface. The fact, however, deserves emphasising, that about 255 the Roman schismatic Novatian,² after quoting Rom. xii. with the words *beatus apostolus Paulus*, introduces Heb. xiii. 15 as follows: *sed et sanctissimus Barnabas . . . inquit*. Hence Hebrews is included in Holy Scripture, but under the name of Barnabas, not of Paul.

3. The African Church maintained the same conservative attitude. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, who died in 285, was

¹ See especially III. xxii. 4, IV. xxvi. 7.

² See p. 108 of Batiffol's *editio princeps* of the *Tractatus Origenis* (1900), which in reality contains material peculiar to Novatian.

exceedingly fond of quoting the Bible in his writings, and his collection of 'Maxims'¹ supplies very full information as to the compass of his New Testament. The earlier appendages to the New Testament existed no longer; he held the Apocalypse in honour, but did not know the Epistle to the Hebrews, and of the Catholic Epistles quoted only 1. Peter and 1. John. It is true that another African bishop introduced 2. John as a sacred authority at the Synod of the year 256, and his introductory formula, 'The Apostle John in his Epistle,' shows that we may not conclude that when Cyprian makes a similar use of the singular in reference to 1. John and 1. Peter, he knew only of one Epistle by each of these Apostles. But Cyprian cannot have included the Second Epistle of John, nor, consequently, the Third, in his New Testament, otherwise he would not have let the best reference (2. John x. 11) in support of the precept that 'men should not converse with heretics' escape him²: the *argumentum e silentio* may be considered incontestable in such a case. The numerous pseudo-Cyprianic writings, which almost all belong to the third century, at first sight display a considerable family likeness; but in reality the sermon 'Adversus Aleatores' shows marked divergencies. Side by side with words of Paul it has recourse to Hermas and the 'Teaching of the Apostles'; while a number of other citations it makes from Christian authorities are even yet unidentified. This tract, which appears to make use of Cyprian's 'Testimonia' (as did Lactantius and Firmicus Maternus in later times) probably proceeded from the Bishop of an African trading city, and shows that in the West, about the year 260, it was agreed that the Four Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, the Apocalypse, some of the Catholic Epistles³ and the Acts were Canonical, but that the circumscription of the new Canon against further edifying literature was far from being complete in all churches alike. If this is once granted, and since the affection of the Spaniard Priscillian (executed at Treves about 385) for all kinds of Apocryphal writings must surely have sprung from an acquaintance with them obtained through

¹ *Testimonia*, lib. iii.: *De Exhortatione Martyrii*.

² *Testim.* iii. 78; cf. *De Unitate*, 17, *Epist.* lix. 20.

³ 1. John iii. 8 is quoted.

the Church, we may unhesitatingly consider the interesting stichometrical 'Catalogus Claromontanus'¹ to be a witness belonging to the *Latin* Church. Here are named among the 'Scripturae,' and after the Four Gospels, first the Pauline Epistles (those to Philemon and the Thessalonians are omitted by an oversight) with the numbers of their verses, then 1. and 2. Peter, James, 1. 2. and 3. John, Jude, Barnabas, the Apocalypse, the Acts, the 'Shepherd' (Hermas), the Acts of Paul, and the Apocalypse of Peter. According to its position in the list, the Epistle of Barnabas appears to mean the Epistle to the Hebrews, a name which has been met with before only among the Latins; Hermas was equally dear both to Eastern and Western communities. The Muratorianum considered the Apocalypse of Peter as Canonical. There remain the Acts of Paul; but even these were occasionally retained in the Bibles of the Latin churches of the fourth and fifth centuries.² Thus any of the Latins might well have drawn up such a list about the year 330: it would, for instance, have suited the taste of a Priscillian excellently.

We cannot here examine all the Fathers of the Latin Church in turn as to the limits of their New Testament; in many cases, too, the answers would prove altogether too uncertain. Briefly, the following statement may be made as to its development between the years 200 and 375.

(a) There is no attempt to shake the Four Gospels, the Acts, the thirteen Pauline Epistles and the Apocalypse. The hyper-orthodox Lucifer of Cagliari³ is the only man who omits the Apocalypse (and this scarcely by accident): banished to the East for many years, he learnt to reject the book from orthodox brethren there. But even Hilary of Poitiers,⁴ who was very much under Greek influence, used the Apocalypse without hesitation: it was indeed obvious by about the year 375 that the Westerns would never give up this document, in spite of the opposition of most of the Eastern churches. (b) The number of the Epistles in the second class has very slowly increased; the minor Epistles offered to

¹ On a few blank pages in Codex D of the Pauline Epistles. See § 52, 2.

² See Harnack, *Texte u. Unters.*, Neue Folge, iv. 3b, esp. pp. 20, 33 fol.

³ † 371.

⁴ † c. 366.

the Latins by their Eastern neighbours were not directly refused, since their contents were orthodox and they bore the names of Apostles, but it was only in exceptional cases that they were really welcomed; 1. Peter and 1. John are quoted far more frequently than the other five put together; only the rarest traces of 2. Peter are to be found before the fourth century. (c) One section of the Western Church was altogether unacquainted with the Epistle to the Hebrews, to which the Alexandrian school had given so secure a position within the body of Pauline writings that it was even treated by some as one of the Homologumena. Others, like Commodianus—as to whose date, unfortunately, we know nothing for certain (perhaps about 300?)—knew it and made use of it; they had probably read it in a Latin translation, but they left the question of authorship undecided, or named Barnabas as the author. Even about the year 370, when the unknown Roman whom we are accustomed to call ‘Ambrosiaster,’ or the Briton Pelagius, soon after 400, wrote commentaries in Rome on the Pauline Epistles, they never thought of commenting on more than thirteen; once only Ambrosiaster quotes, evidently from memory, a passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews, ‘Similarly it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews’; and in the extensive compilation, also of Roman origin, published under the name of Augustine—the ‘*Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti*’—but a single sentence from the Epistle to the Hebrews is quoted, though this time it is introduced—in our texts—by the words ‘*The Apostle says in the Epistle to the Hebrews.*’ In isolated instances indeed, as with Hilary, Lucifer, and, in Spain, Priscillian, mention is made of the Epistle of *Paul* to the Hebrews; but here the connection with Greek theology is notorious.

(d) On the whole, the West showed a much stronger impulse than the East towards the better circumscription of the Canon against other kindred literature. In the search for the highest authority it showed a far more lively feeling for an uncompromising Yea or Nay: a classification such as that of Origen, or still more that of Eusebius, was here quite unheard of. Philastrius of Brescia (chap. lxxxviii., see also lx.) stands almost alone in his opinion, that Apocrypha like the

yet admitted the Catholic Epistles. No Syrian distinguishes between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the other Epistles of Paul. This, in itself, is evidence for the dependence of Syria on the Hellenic East. That Philemon, which is never quoted by the earlier Syrians, was ever wanting in their Canon is improbable, for if this Epistle had been received as part and parcel of a large collection, it could not have been rejected again without strong reason. On the other hand, we learn for certain from the quotations of Aphraates and of Ephraim that the body of Paul's writings was more extensive in the Syrian Church than elsewhere. It contained a further correspondence between Paul and the Corinthian church (composed of scraps of other canonical material, wretchedly pieced together)—including, therefore, a third Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and the reply of the community. Apart from this, the ancient Syrians had a remarkable preference for Apocrypha. These they borrowed in great quantities from the Greeks—Gospels, Apocalypses, legends and teaching of the Apostles—using them for their edification with a piety not unlike that of Priscillian. But later on a general purging took place on the strictest lines: and to this the false Corinthian Epistles fell victims. Until a short time ago our only knowledge of these was drawn from the re-translation in the Armenian Bible, which did not reject them; but in 1891 Berger and Carrière were able to publish an original Latin text of them from a Milanese Bible-manuscript, containing more primitive characteristics than the Armenian. And now C. Schmidt and Harnack have made it certain that these inferior Epistles owe their origin to the Greek Acts of Paul, belonging to the second century.

Thus the Syrian New Testament, about the year 350, is on a far lower plane of development than either the Greek or the Latin; it lacks all the Catholic Epistles, and the Syrians are unwilling to sacrifice the old 'Diatessaron' for the four Gospels; with regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse, they agree with the majority of the Greeks, but they possess certain Apocryphal writings which the Greeks treated as of no account.

§ 42. *The Final Settlement of the New Testament in the Latin Church*

1. The settlement was brought about in the West by means of a small concession to the Greek Church. To the *Greek Church*, not to its theology; for Rufinus,¹ the faithful friend of the Alexandrian school, found no one in the Latin world to follow his attempt to establish three classes: Canonical, Ecclesiastical, and Apocryphal books. More important than this attempt is the fact that all the twenty-seven books of our New Testament of to-day were even then to be found in his first class. Indeed, it was then, about 400, that the incorporation of the Epistle to the Hebrews into the body of Pauline writings was finally accomplished. About the year 390, Philastrius of Brescia, confuter of heretics, could name² in the list of 'Scriptures' of the New Testament, authenticated (!) by the blessed Apostles and their followers, thirteen Pauline beside the seven Catholic Epistles, passing over the Epistle to the Hebrews and even the Apocalypse in absolute silence. But, as he elsewhere recognised Hebrews as Pauline and the Apocalypse as Apostolic, this list only shows that he was not yet accustomed to speak of fourteen Epistles of Paul. The decision in this case is brought about by Jerome and Augustine, the latter being to a certain extent influenced by Jerome, who for his part had not made a study of Greek theology in vain. Jerome knew from Eusebius how many books of the New Testament had been considered 'doubtful'; he knew that even then, in the East, some writings of the early Church, such as Hermas and 1. Clement, stood very close to the New Testament; but he makes no practical use of this knowledge. When, however, he could advantageously quote the Apocalypse or one of the Catholic Epistles as an authority, he did so; and, although he often used some cautious formula in introducing passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews, he soon began to quote it more and more frequently, with the utmost solemnity, as 'The Epistle of the Apostle Paul.' Augustine, too, still used the older and more reserved expression, 'the Epistle

¹ † 410.

² Chap. lxxxviii.

with the title: to the Hebrews,' but in the official list in his *De Doctrina Christiana*, ii. 8, he reckoned fourteen Epistles of Paul, and among them, the last in the list, the Epistle to the Hebrews. Most important of all, the African Synods, inspired by Augustine, published at Hippo Regius in the year 393, and at Carthage in 397 and 419, lists of the Scriptures as Church Laws, which give the New Testament *in its present compass*, with this noticeable difference, that, while the lists before 400 ran: thirteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul and one to the Hebrews by the same Apostle; in 419 the fourteen Epistles of Paul are simply bracketed together. On this point the example of the Bishop of Rome was followed—for Africa was very careful to make sure that Rome agreed with her decisions—for in 405 Innocent I. had issued a rescript addressed to the Bishop of Toulouse, in which he briefly specified the fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul among the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. The 'Epistolae Johannis III.' follows immediately upon this, so that the Apostolic authorship of the three Epistles of John was positively enunciated from Rome, and the distinction founded on individual erudition and accepted by Pope Damasus,¹ between the Apostle, author of the First Epistle of John, and the presbyter, author of the Second and Third Epistles, was abandoned. The Apostolic inheritance was completely included in those twenty-seven books. From that time onward the watchword was: 'Nothing more and nothing less.' Rome and Africa alike were vigilant to secure its universal acceptance, and the more rapid the success of the 'nothing less,' the stronger the logical necessity to insist upon the 'nothing more'; hence from now onwards the Catalogue of the 'Rejected,' the pseudo-Apostolic and pseudo-Scriptural books of the New Testament, became a form of literature in great request. Innocent, indeed, mentions to his Gallican friend the more important issues, which the latter must not only avoid, but condemn.²

2. However, it would be a great mistake to represent the question of the Canon as finally settled in all Western Christian communities by about the year 400. The Church

¹ † 386.

² See pp. 563 fol.

has made her decision, Augustine's authority in Latin Christendom being so overwhelming that there can be no further official debate as to the legal boundaries of the New Testament; but the written law is far from having managed to extinguish at one stroke the opposing rights of custom. I am not referring here to learned traditions among the literary historians touching 'disputed' and 'recognised' Scriptures; Junilius, with his three classes of authorities,¹ belongs least of all, language notwithstanding, to the representatives of the Western Church. But the manuscripts of the Epistles of Paul (and of entire Bibles also) which did not include the Epistle to the Hebrews were not so quickly enlarged, or rather replaced by complete copies, as to enable this Epistle actually and everywhere to take the place which was officially recognised as its own. We shall not be surprised to find that many 'Fathers' of the next age are not yet fully acquainted with it, and that a Catalogue of the 'old translation' accessible to Cassiodorus only sets forth the twenty-six books of the New Testament; the Epistle to the Hebrews being probably the one omitted, as the full number of the seven Catholic Epistles is given. On the other hand, the German tribes, especially the West-Goths, had brought Bibles with them from the East to Spain and the south of France, and when they went over to the orthodox church they did not at once lightly abandon their traditions; thus in the Spanish Synod the opponents of the Apocalypse were still being combated after the year 600! Again, books which the Greek and Latin Churches abhorred were still retained through individual affection in particular communities. Not to mention Priscillian's predilection for the Apocrypha, we know of one such case from Augustine, who reproaches² a certain presbyter because writings not included in the ecclesiastical Canon were publicly read in his community. No doubt similar cases often occurred of which we have no record. The history of the Epistle to the Laodiceans offers the most remarkable example of the long-continued elasticity of the limits of the New Testament, even in the Western Church, in spite of all the Rescripts of Bishops and

¹ See p. 9.

² *Epistola*, lxiv. 3.

the decrees of Councils. The Epistle in question is short, unimportant and colourless. It was supposed to be written by Paul to the Church of Laodicea¹; Priscillian undoubtedly made use of it, and in the so-called pseudo-Augustinian 'Speculum,'² which is certainly later than Augustine, it takes the place of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is wanting; numerous manuscripts of the Vulgate include it; and the Greek Church, which had been offered the Epistle in its own tongue, took occasion to issue a decree condemning such folly. It is not so much the energy of the Church as the growth of historical judgment through the study of Jerome's and Augustine's writings, which again banished this intruder from the Latin Bible before the end of the Middle Ages.

§ 43. *The Final Settlement of the New Testament in the Greek Church*

1. The Greek Church appears to have overcome the unsatisfactory condition of her New Testament, as set forth by Eusebius, with surprising rapidity. We possess several lists of the sacred books dating from the fourth century: one by Cyril of Jerusalem³ in his 'Catecheses'⁴; one by Athanasius⁵ in his thirty-ninth Easter Epistle (A.D. 367); one by Epiphanius⁶ in the 'Panarion' (§ 76); and two metrical lists by Gregory of Nazianzus⁷ and his contemporary Amphilochius of Iconium. To these we may add, possibly, the so-called eighty-fifth Apostolic Canon, and more probably the so-called sixtieth Laodicean Canon, although this may not have been attached until later to the fifty-ninth Canon of a Laodicean Synod, held about 360, which only issued a general condemnation of the practice of reading the uncanonical books in the churches. Among these catalogists Amphilochius alone considers himself bound to follow Origen and Eusebius as a detailed statistician; here, however, he is peculiar in admitting James as well as 1. Peter and 1. John among the

¹ Col. iv. 16.

² c. 348.

³ The text in Preuschen: *vide supra*, references at head of Part II. *ad init.*

⁴ † 403.

⁵ § ii. *Liber de Divinis Scripturis.*

⁶ iv. 33, 36.

⁷ † 390.

quite undoubted Catholic Epistles. He regards the Epistle to the Hebrews as genuine; and therefore, in spite of occasional self-contradictions, he enumerates from the first fourteen Epistles of Paul; the Apocalypse, he says, is *declared by the majority to be spurious*. Cyril, Gregory of Nazianzus and the sixtieth Canon of Laodicea give twenty-six books of the New Testament—those of to-day without the Apocalypse—and the term ‘the seven Catholic Epistles’ is already fully established. A short notice is added as to the genuineness of these books, and these books alone, and a warning given against the reading of false and harmful works, but not a hint appears of the existence of several classes of Canonical books.

Epiphanius is only distinguished from those already mentioned by the fact that he concludes by naming the Apocalypse also as a component part of the Holy Scriptures, in this agreeing with Athanasius. His list has this advantage over the rest, that it contains an appendix ‘for the sake of greater accuracy,’ stating that besides these books there were some others which were not Canonical, but were appointed by the Fathers to be read aloud to the Catechumens: viz. the ‘Wisdom of Solomon’ and other Old Testament Apocrypha, the ‘Teaching of the Apostles’ and the ‘Shepherd’ of Hermas. To this sorry condition has Eusebius’s second class fallen, and that at best in a few Greek communities. Its contents are relegated to the position of reading-books (*ἀναγιγνωσκόμενα*) as opposed to the Canonical Scriptures, though they are sharply distinguished from Class III.—the Apocryphal forgeries of heretics.

We can now understand that an Alexandrian of the time of Athanasius might include the ‘Teaching of the Apostles’ and Hermas, side by side with Sirach and Judith, in a Bible manuscript intended for church purposes, but we can also understand that the position of books for public reading beside the Canonical books could not long have been maintained in face of the chilly silence of so many other Churchmen. The only question of importance for the Greek Church in the matter of the New Testament now is, whether the New Testament of Athanasius *with* the Apocalypse, or that of the Palestinians without it, shall prevail. In the fourth century *the majority*

onwards (e.g. John Zonaras) treated the various opinions as to the compass of the New Testament. Even in the West the (50) 'Apostolic Canons' are occasionally included in the New Testament; the Canon of Mabillon, from a *Codex Bobbiensis*,¹ deliberately reckons twenty-eight books of the New Testament, placing after the four Gospels a *liber sacramentorum*—a Mass-book of some sort. (Harnack's emendation, 'secretorum uno' [= *Actus Pauli*], cannot be accepted, owing to the position after the four Gospels.) Again, in Gaul in the fifth century the *Actus Pauli* were still retained in the New Testament; while up to the thirteenth century Church historians of repute were among those who recognised fifteen Epistles of Paul—that is, who admitted the Epistle to the Laodiceans as genuine. Express rejection of the apocryphon as a forgery is rarer than its grateful acceptance. In this instance the East is only a few degrees more careless than was the West down to the sixteenth century. Thus the table of contents of Codex A² added to the New Testament 1. and 2. Clement. John of Damascus³ reckoned the 'Canons of the Holy Apostles' (he appends *διὰ Κλήμεντος*) among the New Testament Books. The last (85th) of these Canons names before the Acts, as belonging to the New Testament, two Epistles of Clement, and the 'ordinances which I, Clement, have issued to you, the bishops, in eight books' ('Constitutiones Apostolorum'), although the following qualification is added, 'these must not be made public to all on account of the secret things (*τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς μυστικά*) which they contain.' Antilegomena of the New Testament reappear in the Stichometry of Nicephorus,⁴ viz. side by side with the Apocalypse of John, the Apocalypse of Peter, Barnabas, and the Gospel of the Hebrews. Here, too, the 'Teaching of the Apostles,' 1. and 2. Clement, and Hermas figure among the apocrypha of the New Testament, while the pseudo-Athanasian Synopsis names the 'Teaching of the Apostles' and the 'Clementia' as New Testament Antilegomena (or books for public reading!) beside certain extremely questionable documents—though with the qualification 'from which only the truest and the inspired parts have been

¹ Of c. 600.² See § 52, 2.³ c. 730.⁴ See p. 546.

written out after careful selection.' We have here the unmistakable attempt to clothe the books of ecclesiastical law with Canonical authority; and thus we can well understand that the Copts and Ethiopians (including the Abyssinians), who drew all their ideas from Alexandria, included their legal codes directly in their New Testament, so that the Ethiopian New Testament contained thirty-five books. If the identity between Apostolic and Canonical were strictly insisted on, and if Apostolic rank were claimed for the greatest existing sources of the law, it was only logical to canonise the Apostolic 'Constitutions' and the like; to be consistent, the West should have done the same with its 'Apostolic' *Symbolum*. But when this idea arose there was no room left in the New Testament; and the Greek Church, instead of the 'Apostolicum,' had the *Nicaenum*, the origin of which did not permit of such treatment.

§ 44. *The Final Settlement of the New Testament in the national Churches of the East*

When the rich remains of Syrian literature shall have been thoroughly examined and made universally accessible, a continuous history of the New Testament among the Syrians (on whom the other national Churches of the East, the Persian and the Armenian, are dependent) may probably be written, from the earliest times down to our own day. Until that time we must content ourselves with indicating the few perfectly certain points. Through Cosmas¹ we know that there were only three Catholic Epistles in the Syrian Canon, James, 1. Peter and 1. John; this agrees with the state of the case in the Syrian translation of the Bible, the Peshitto. In its present state this document cannot be older than the fourth century; thus the only certain inference it affords is that the Syrian Church of the fourth century possessed a New Testament of twenty-two books — Jude, 2. Peter, 2. and 3. John and the Apocalypse being absent. We do not know when the Syrians gave up the pseudo-Corinthian correspondence; it can scarcely have been before

¹ See p. 547.

the fifth century. The breath of criticism from Antioch swept away the Apocrypha: to the same cause may be ascribed the resistance offered in Syria to an enlargement of the New Testament by the addition of the Apocalypse (which was certainly known to Ephraim) and the four minor Catholic Epistles. Even James is again somewhat thrust into the shade; at least in the great School of Nisibis, according to Junilius,¹ after the Epistles of Paul, only 1. Peter and 1. John are recognised as absolutely authoritative books, while the other five—and still more the Apocalypse, ‘which is considered very doubtful by the Orientals’—enjoy but a secondary rank. Probably it seemed enough at Nisibis that *theologians* should be acquainted with such debated writings; the laity were offered only those which possessed the highest authority. Since the East Syrian Church subscribed to Nestorianism (condemned from the time of the Council of Ephesus in 431) and was thus entirely cut off from the neighbouring Western Churches, we can scarcely imagine any motive which could induce it to complete its New Testament after the pattern of the Greek; we cannot be surprised that a Syrian manuscript (probably East Syrian) of the year 1470, formally concludes its New Testament with the Pauline Epistles, and then proceeds: ‘We here add to the Epistles of Paul the Epistles of the Apostles which are not to be found in all the Codices.’ Then follow 2. Peter, 2. and 3. John, Jude, and the two ‘Clementine’ Epistles on Virginity.

In West Syria Monophysitism prevailed. The Syrian Monophysites kept up a lively correspondence with those of like mind among the Greeks and Copts; the respect for the authority of Greek tradition, which led them about 500 to undertake a more accurate translation of the original text than the Peshitto, was also the occasion of their increasing their three Catholic Epistles to seven, in accordance with the Greek MSS. But even the second and revised edition of that translation (that of 616), which is better known to us, did not, apparently, originally include the Apocalypse, which was added later, and at last found its way into the Peshitto manuscripts together with the four minor Catholic Epistles.

¹ See p. 9.

The Monophysite Dionysius Bar Salibi (†1171) wrote commentaries on the Apocalypse, the Acts, seven Catholic and fourteen Pauline Epistles, in exactly the same style as on the four Gospels. The anti-Chalcedonian Armenians imitated their Syrian brethren; but the anxiety of the Westerns as to the separation of the Canonical from other early Christian literature is not to be found among any Orientals. As the Armenians were edified by 3. Corinthians, so a certain Syrian Bible-Codex written at Edessa in 1170 placed the Epistles of Clement of Rome (but not the 'De Virginitate') between Jude and Romans as Canonical books, and even provided them with a system of pericopic subdivision!

§ 45. *The Maintenance of the New Testament Canon in the Age of the Reformation*

1. The Reformation of the sixteenth century shook the established Canon to its foundations; the Reformed Churches removed a number of books from the Old Testament entirely, the Lutherans partially, branding them as 'Apocryphal.' It seemed for some time as though the New Testament was destined to undergo similar treatment. 'Humanism' had already brought forward long-forgotten facts as to the history of the Canon; not only did Erasmus of Rotterdam question the authenticity of Hebrews, 2. Peter, James, 2. and 3. John and the Apocalypse—though without challenging their canonicity, and prepared throughout to condemn such doubts as soon as the Church should have decided definitely that not only the contents, but the titles of these books were unassailable—but even the Cardinal Gaetano,¹ the celebrated opponent of Luther, entertained great mistrust of Hebrews, James, 2. and 3. John, and Jude, and therefore concluded that their authority was inferior. If Hebrews were not written by Paul, its canonicity was not assured, and a doubtful question of faith could not be decided on the authority of this Epistle alone. Sixtus of Siena² still speaks of seven deuterocanonical writings of the New Testament, and the Jesuit Bellarmine repeated it after him, but perhaps simply in order to stamp it as a piece of learned lore. For within the province of the Roman Catholic

¹ † 1534.

² See p. 10.

Church the question of the Canon had meanwhile been set at rest for ever. The Œcumenical Council of Trent, at its fourth sitting, on April 8, 1546, had declared the whole contents of the Vulgate, definitely enumerating the twenty-seven books of the New Testament—among them ‘Pauli Apostoli ad Hebraeos’ and ‘Jacobi Apostoli [!] una’—to be Divine (that is, sacred and Canonical) without admitting any difference of degree between the constituent parts. In order to defend interpolations agreeable to the Church, such as Mark xvi. 9 fol. and the ‘Comma Johanneum’ (see § 51, 3), this canonisation was expressly extended to ‘the books in their entirety, with all their parts, as they are habitually read in the Catholic Church, and as they are to be found in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate.’ Since then, in cases where the scientific consciousness of a Roman Catholic still compels opposition to a portion of the Vulgate tradition, he must be content with challenging the primitiveness, the authenticity, of a verse, a section, a book of the New Testament, and take comfort in the thought that the authority and canonicity of a passage in the Bible has nothing to do with its genuineness. This servitude corresponds to the nature of the Roman Catholic Church; but it would never have been so openly proclaimed, had not the fearless criticism employed by the German revolutionaries against the Holy Scripture itself compelled the traditional Church to define the limits of what it held to be Canonical with absolute accuracy.

2. The criticism which Luther brought to bear upon the traditional New Testament was not from the historic, but from the dogmatic, or, more precisely, from the religious side. Personal experience and study of the Scriptures gradually convinced him that the Gospel, faith and salvation had been utterly distorted in the corrupt theology of his time; that the truth, as the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles had delivered it to us, was far removed from the teaching of the Church. This he was prepared to prove from the Holy Scriptures themselves; and with the consciousness of power which marks religious genius, he raised his own understanding of Paul and John into the standard by which everything reputed sacred and Divine must be tried. Thereafter he measured the Scripture by the

Scripture, and from 1519 onwards, and most forcibly in his treatises on the German New Testament in 1522, contrasted the 'well-assured, principal books'—above all, John, Romans and Galatians—with other books in the New Testament deserving of open blame, namely Hebrews, Jude, James and the Apocalypse. The teaching of Hebrews as to the Atonement was false: possibly Apollos might have written it; Jude was unnecessary beside 2. Peter; as for the Apocalypse, he could not see 'that it was inspired by the Holy Ghost.' But, above all, the Epistle of James was a thing of straw, which gave to works the power of justification, in direct opposition to Paul, and sought to teach Christian people without reminding them of the sufferings of Christ.

Zwingli also called the Apocalypse a 'non-Biblical book,' and considered Hebrews, from religious motives, as non-Pauline; Ecolampadius (1530) admits a 'slighter authority' for the Apocalypse, James, Jude, 2. Peter and 3. John, while even Calvin showed plainly that he had doubts as to the Epistle to the Hebrews, 2. and 3. John, 2. Peter and the Apocalypse, though these doubts were in the main based on the history of the Canon. The typical representative of this kind of 'criticism' of the Canon is Carlstadt, who in 1520 wrote a '*Libellus de Canonicis Scripturis*,' publishing a German abstract of it at the same time. In this, while rigidly enforcing the idea of inspiration, he met the historical facts by distinguishing three classes of Authorities among the Books of the New Testament as well as of the Old: (1) those of the highest dignity: the four Gospels; (2) those of the second order: the Acts, thirteen Epistles of Paul, 1. Peter and 1. John; (3) the third and lowest both in authority and celebrity: the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apocalypse, and five Catholic Epistles. He hoped by this means to have cut away the ground from that subjectivism which judged of Biblical Books according to individual religious taste, and to have substituted for it a criticism founded on history. In reality, as regards the New Testament, he slavishly submitted to the same Catholic tradition which, by the aid of this New Testament, he had thought to cast off as miserable human handiwork. It was not the Protestant spirit that stirred in Carlstadt's '*Libellus*'; a learned Nestorian might have put

forward essentially the same ideas. Moreover, Carlstadt demanded a universal recognition for his theses, while Luther forbade no man to think as his own spirit taught him with regard to the books he held in least esteem: indeed he translated and spread abroad the disputed writings just as he did the above-mentioned 'principal books.'

However, such a freedom of decision could not remain open to an Evangelical Church, any more than could Carlstadt's division into different orders, if the idea of inspiration was to be taken up seriously and stretched to its extreme limits. Among the Reformers, Beza¹ stands at the end of the epoch in which the genuineness, the Apostolic title, of any book of the New Testament could be called in question. In the Lutheran Church an echo of Luther's forcible words was to be heard until about 1700. M. Chemnitius described the Antilegomena as New Testament Apocrypha of insufficient authority; here again we find the 'objective' criticism, springing from real historical knowledge, not the subjective religious criticism of Luther; hence he decides on seven, not four, Antilegomena; hence, too, a lasting success was impossible for his conclusions within the religious community. The stiffest Lutherans, however, shared his point of view, and with remarkable complacency discussed the question as to what was to be said for or against the Apostolic origin of these books: that is, of their authorship by inspired instruments. The Lutheran scholastics of the seventeenth century still spoke of Canonical books of the New Testament of the second order, or of deutero-canonical books. But this terminology disappeared even with them about 1700, and rightly so, since no logical conclusions affecting dogma could be drawn from it. Equal qualities, an equally high authority, were allotted to all the twenty-seven Books of the New Testament: thus even through the storms of the Reformation the original New Testament held its own.

And here its history ends. Although since then theological science may have given its verdict against the Apostolic origin of many a New Testament Book—although it may have fundamentally transformed the conception of the New Testament Canon, or indeed all the conceptions which are bound

¹ † 1605.

up with it—for the past three hundred years no one has dreamt of altering the New Testament of the Church, either by diminishing or increasing it, or by marking out different degrees within it. Since Luther and the earlier Lutherans, the *dogma* of the Canon and the historical criticism of the New Testament Books, have indeed had their histories, but not the New Testament Canon itself, not the collection as such. The text alone, the wording of certain passages, still continues to develop and to take new forms.

§ 46. *The Variations in the Order of the different Parts of the New Testament*

[*Cf.* T. Zahn, 'Gesch. des N.T. lichen Kanons,' ii. 343–383, and S. Berger, 'Histoire de la Vulgate' (1893), pp. 301–6 and 331–42.]

1. A glance at the Lutheran Bible will show that such an apparently indifferent question as that of the order of the New Testament Books is of no small importance in the history of the Canon. In it the Epistle to the Hebrews stands in the midst of the Catholic Epistles, followed by James, Jude, and the Apocalypse. Such a singular arrangement can only be explained by remembering Luther's judgment upon these four documents of the New Testament. In his eyes they were not the pure metal unalloyed, and he therefore gives them a lower place: Hebrews first, because the Pauline Epistles preceded the Catholic; the Apocalypse last, because he was accustomed to read it at the end. In the oldest editions he had only carried the numbered index of New Testament Books as far as 3. John (i.e. to No. 23); the last four books were given no numbers at all—a more eloquent witness as to his attitude towards them than long discussions on the question of their authors! Except for this separation of the last four, Luther kept to the order usual in his time. This, however, only became permanent through the invention of printing; from that time onwards the Apocalypse everywhere forms the conclusion of the New Testament, as the fourfold Gospel forms the beginning; the Acts stand after the Gospels, and the only point which still varies is that most of the newer Greek texts place the Catholic Epistles before, the Vulgate texts after, the Pauline Epistles.

It is to be regretted, though perhaps it is not surprising, that even in its 'Novum Testamentum Graece' the new Stuttgart edition has introduced Luther's order, unsupported as it is by any Greek manuscripts.

2. Before the introduction of printing, the New Testament is found comparatively rarely in one volume, so that it seems as though the majority of the manuscripts could teach us nothing as to the order of the whole. But the manuscripts almost always include—except in the case of the Apocalypse and the Acts—several connected books, such as the *four* Gospels, the Pauline or the Catholic Epistles. The Epistle to the Galatians was not copied out alone any more than the Epistle of Jude. Now, the order within these groups shows variations which are not always accidental. With the Gospels the present established order is very old,¹ and has by far the largest amount of evidence in its favour. And since John is considered to be the last-written of the Gospels, the time of writing may be taken as the general principle on which these books are grouped. There is an important deviation from this principle in those collections in which we find the Gospel of John placed before the Gospels of the Apostles' disciples²—that is, either after or even before Matthew; in these the desire is to place the two Apostolic Gospels together, or perhaps the Beloved Disciple's first of all. Other re-arrangements, such as the placing of Luke before Mark, can only be looked on as exceptions, and have no historical interest.

As to the Epistles of Paul, we gather from the history of the Canon that the Greeks, almost without exception, placed the Epistle to the Hebrews before the private Epistles, as No. 10, sometimes also as No. 4 after 2. Corinthians, to which it fairly corresponds in length; the Westerns almost as invariably placed it after them as No. 14. Even the Epistle to the Laodiceans is inserted immediately before the Epistle to the Hebrews in a few Latin manuscripts. As a rule, its place is next to Colossians. It is difficult to decide at what time the present arrangement of Paul's Epistles

¹ As early as the Canon of Muratori and the Mommsonianus.

² E.g., Catal. Claromontanus; see p. 536.

replaced the motley confusion presented by Marcion and the Muratorianum; it took place before the fourth century, however, for Cyprian found it already existing in all essentials. It is very probable that the Epistles to the Churches and those to individuals were at one time separated, but otherwise placed according to their length: thus establishing a basis for a rough estimate of their value. Only in one point does the greater part of the Latin evidence differ until late in the Middle Ages from the Greek tradition; the Epistle to the Colossians is usually placed after 2. Thessalonians.

The variations in the case of the Catholic Epistles are connected with the gradual growth of this collection; at first there were only 1. John and 1. Peter; naturally 2. and 3. John and 2. Peter were attached to their predecessors; but when James and Jude had to be added, it was necessary to make some arbitrary arrangement. As early as Eusebius, James stands first: the probable order of the rest was Peter, John, Jude, as in most of the Eastern lists, and, since Jerome's time, in those of the West also: consideration for the words of Gal. ii. 9, 'James and Cephas, and John, they who were reputed to be pillars,' might have decided in favour of this order. In the West, on the other hand, the 'Canon Mommsonianus' and the Rescript of Innocent name John as the first, no doubt because he was the Beloved Disciple; otherwise Peter enjoys this position almost universally in districts under Roman sway: some placing John immediately afterwards, others (probably under Greek influence) first James and then John and Jude; more rarely James and Jude first, and then John (e.g. Rufinus). If Jude is occasionally found in the West before James, the reason might be that he was there admitted to the Canon earlier than James.

3. But we possess at any rate a sufficient number of complete Bibles and lists of the New Testament Books to be able to pronounce an opinion as to the succession of the five integral parts—the Gospels, the Acts, the Pauline Epistles, the Catholic Epistles, and the Apocalypse. As the Gospels were the first to appear in the Canon, so they have always maintained their place at the beginning. The few exceptions in which they form the conclusion to the New

Testament are not of more importance than the placing of Paul by some Vulgate manuscript between Isaiah and Genesis, or of the Apocalypse, the Catholic Epistles and the Acts, between Jeremiah and 1. Samuel. The Apocalypse usually takes the last place, wherever it is read at all; as early as Origen, as we know, it follows the Gospels and the Apostles; its conclusion formed a peculiarly fitting end to the Holy Scriptures, and its outlook towards the end of the world appeared naturally to assign it to the last place. Codex α shows the following order for the three middle portions: Pauline Epistles, Acts, Catholic Epistles; Codex B, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Pauline Epistles. Augustine,¹ followed by most mediæval authorities, including Pope Eugenius IV. in his Bull of 1441, presents this order: Pauline Epistles, Catholic Epistles, Acts; hence it always appears that the Acts and the Catholic Epistles have a closer connection with one another than with Paul; ² as if in those two 'all the Apostles' were represented, over against the one Apostle Paul. When the order: Pauline Epistles, Catholic Epistles, Acts, was introduced, it was for the sake of having all the Epistles together; to place the Pauline before the Catholic Epistles and the Acts might appear more natural, considering the course of the history of the Canon; but the final victory of an order which placed the Acts before the Epistles was brought about by the feeling that the place of the Acts, as history, was immediately after the Gospels, themselves historical books. That the Pauline Epistles were finally placed immediately after the Acts, thereby deposing the Catholic Epistles, is due to their advantage over the Catholic in quality and quantity—an advantage which unintentionally found this means of expression. Thus we may now conveniently make the threefold division of the New Testament into five books of history, twenty-one Epistles, and one book of Prophecy, corresponding to the order of subject-matter in the Old Testament of the Greeks; but the early ages, which looked more to the contents than the form, attached no value to such an arrangement.

It is characteristic of the state of the Canon that the New

¹ *De Doctr. Christ.* ii. 8 (13).

² See Philastrius: *Quæ septem* [i.e. the Cath. Ep.] *Actibus Apostolorum conjunctæ sunt.*

Testament could be arranged in such various orders at all ; it is not less characteristic that since the Council of Trent and Luther's translation of the Bible, *the Churches* know no more of such alternatives.

§ 47. *Result of the History of the Canon*

1. As the original Canon of the New Testament grew out of the usages of the Church, and consisted of the books which had long served in the leading communities for edification and for settling questions of belief, and as this canonisation of tradition was only justified, *after it was already accomplished*, by the assertion that none but Apostolic writings had been canonised, so the second half of the history of the Canon is entirely governed by the idea here indicated, an idea which was firmly grasped as early as the time of Irenæus and Tertullian. The Apostles signify to the Church of the New Covenant exactly what Moses and the Prophets signified to the people of the Old ; the writings of the Apostles must stand on the same level with theirs, as authentic records of Divine Revelation. But naturally this only applied to the genuine, uncorrupted writings. Augustine felt no more strongly against the heretics who rejected the Apostolic writings, or portions of them, because these were not to their liking, than against those who could not endure that the hymn uttered by Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 30) or the Epistle written by Paul to the Laodiceans (according to Col. iv. 16) should no longer be in existence, and supplied the loss by their own fabrications : 'what is Apostolic is Canonical,' was his principle, but only what is truly Apostolic. Whether those writings which were called Apostolic really possessed this quality was left to the decision of none but the Apostolic Church, the questioner herself. What the Church had always held to be Apostolic must be accepted as such, and by 'the Church' the *majority* in the Church was meant. Since the effort after uniformity constantly increased from the year 200 onwards, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse had at last to be given their place in the Canon,

in spite of all objections, because the tradition of the whole Greek Church supported the former, and that of the whole Latin Church the latter. The case is different as regards the minor Catholic Epistles. They had not held a high place of old in any important church or circle of churches; they emerge almost without warning from obscurity, and raise the question of their recognition by the Church in spite of deficient 'tradition.' This question was answered variously according as more stress was laid on the trustworthiness of their Apostolic title or on the ecclesiastical tradition supporting them; at last it was agreed to accept them because they contained nothing which might contradict their Apostolic authorship, and because they attached themselves very easily to the Epistles already in existence, 1. Peter and 1. John; while the importance of these old favourites was happily increased by such a timely addition.

On the other hand, after the year 200, non-Apostolic writings, however brilliant their recommendation, could not by any manner of means effect an entry into communities which had not an earlier acquaintance with them. *New writings were only received if they came with an Apostolic title*; hence the Catholic uniformity of the New Testament with regard to writings like those of Clement, Barnabas and Hermas could only be attained by abandoning these even in their old homes. With them were abandoned also a number of works with an Apostolic title, such as the 'Teaching of the Apostles,' the Preaching and the Apocalypse of Peter, and the Acts of Paul, because the general sense of the Church discovered in them a closer relationship with undoubted heretical forgeries than with the Apostolic writings of the Canon, and because, on the whole, they had no sufficient points of connection with the Canon. Who knows whether the Apocalypse of Peter would not at last have been received in the West, as was the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, if, at the decisive moment, the Apocalypse of John had not been rejected in the Greek Church, thus making the Apocalypse of Peter untenable? Accident of this kind influenced the decision; but from the third century onwards the Church, with constantly increasing energy, *consciously* refused to

admit anything within the Canon except the whole body of the *attested* writings of the Apostles.¹ Those who ascribed the Apocalypse to a holy and inspired man distinct from the Apostle, or 2. and 3. John to an otherwise unknown Presbyter, and yet would retain them in the Canon, stand entirely alone. The required attestation is now found, artlessly enough, in the fact that the Church accepted them as Apostolic; as Augustine explained to the Manichæans, 'I must give credence to the Acts of the Apostles if I do to the Gospels, for both writings are recommended to me equally by the Catholic authority.'

Augustine could not have entertained the theory of a modern Catholic theologian, Cornely—who indeed has a forerunner in Gregory the Great,—viz. that if Hebrews were proved to proceed, not from Paul, but from one of his disciples or some other Apostolic person, its canonicity would not suffer, inasmuch as this depended, not on its Apostolic origin, but on its inspiration as recognised by the Church; nor that of another Catholic, Martin, according to which certain portions of the Vulgate which do not belong to the original text are quasi-canonical, the authority of the Church supplying their defect and lending them a force which they had not in themselves. For Augustine, Apostolicity is the foundation upon which rest inspiration and canonicity, i.e. ecclesiastical recognition; in his eyes, to accept ecclesiastical recognition as a substitute for inspiration would be a sheer inversion of things. These theories, indeed, are but a return, by no means artless, to the first stage in the formation of the Canon, in which

¹ The Christians whom Jerome attacks in his *Commentary on Philemon* might be considered an exception; they rejected this Epistle on account of its unimportant contents, because it did not contain teaching, but was only a letter of recommendation. The Holy Ghost, they said, had dwelt uninterruptedly in no man but Christ. But I cannot believe that these unknown Christians are really meant for the Syrian Church, in spite of the fact that Chrysostom and Theodore also assert the real value of this Epistle, with all the appearance of conducting a set argument in its defence. The question is one of points of pedantic theory, the importance of which Jerome exaggerates in order to make corresponding display of his zeal in defence; the learned writer himself has to acknowledge that 'all the Churches in the whole world have received the Epistle,' and the dogma of the uninterrupted inspiration of the Apostles is not seriously in danger.

the sympathy of the communities, not a theory of inspiration or any learned information concerning the author, lent the sacred books their authority. Luther's and Zwingli's return to the subjectivism of the earliest Church, while betraying another spirit, is in no cruder opposition to the law of history.

2. The technical term for what is recommended by this Catholic authority is *Canonical*; for that which it rejects on solicitation, *Apocryphal*. The original meaning of the word 'Canon' (canonical, canonise) in this technical application is not perfectly clear; the Latins translate it sometimes by *regula*, sometimes by *numerus*. Both these meanings are attested by other evidence as well; *κανών* originally meant *standard*, *rule*, and therefore may also signify something established by absolute rule, something fixed (e.g. in the State, *τὸν κανόνα πληροῦν*=to pay the fixed tax-assessment), such as a catalogue,¹ an index. Now, as in the oldest ecclesiastical literature the word *κανών*, with additions such as 'of the faith, of the truth,' represents the ideal conception of the Divine things of the Church—its new law, whether written or unwritten—so, on the other hand, might theology, when it began to speak of a Canon of Divine writings, of admittance into this Canon and the like, have understood by it the fixed and established *list κατ' ἐξοχήν*—that of the Holy Scriptures. Only in this sense do we speak of a Canon of Muratori, and the same sense meets us again when Amphilochius² sets up his catalogue of the Biblical Books as an entirely infallible Canon of the inspired writings; or when Augustine speaks of the Canon of Holy Scriptures which requires definite limitation: 'Quem definitum esse oportebat.' Nevertheless, in the ecclesiastical use of the word 'Canon,' as=the Old and New Testaments, the idea of the subject-matter absolutely prevails over that of the form; with the word 'Canon,' a judgment is passed upon the contents of certain Scriptures: they are those which the Church holds to be incorruptible records of the Law of God. The Canon is the pattern according to which everything in the Church is judged; Canonisation signifies

¹ E.g. the Canons of Eusebius (below, § 50, 5), and Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 19.

² § 43, 1.

recognition as an integral part of this pattern. In using the word 'canonical' the Christian of about the year 200 had exactly the same feeling as if he had said: Divine, holy, infallible, an absolute standard. Augustine used the terms 'Canon' and 'authority' interchangeably, and in some places used the two together. He considered 'Canonical' Epistles as synonymous with 'inspired'; everywhere alike 'Canonical' is the absolutely binding, as opposed to the neutral and the bad—the writings lacking authority. The epithet 'Canonical' as applied to books is exchanged without any alteration of sense with 'testamental' (*ἐνδιάθηκος* and *ἐνδιάθετος*) or 'included' (*ἐγκριτος*) or even 'ecclesiastical' (this particularly with the Latins). It is interesting to note that instead of *κανονιζόμεναι* or even beside it, the Greeks often put *ἐκκλησιαζόμεναι*, 'belonging to the Church,' i.e. recognised by the whole Church. At the opposite pole to these stand the 'writings of individuals.'¹ The books in which the Church recognises her own flesh and blood are intended for publicity, they have to be brought forward regularly at every vital act of the Church; so that even the Muratorianum speaks of the 'Se publicare in ecclesia populo,' and later writers often of the *δημοσιεύεσθαι* of the sacred books, which is at last no longer distinguishable from the 'reading aloud to the congregations.'

The most comprehensive term for the books which were rejected, in spite of apparent claims to the highest rank, is the *Apocrypha*. In the mouth of the Gnostics it is a term of esteem; their *secret* traditions, as contrasted with the *trivial*, were the precious possessions of the Elect. The Church had every reason to keep the secret literature of the Gnostics at a distance; she was as proud of her published as they were of their secret records; all the 'secret writings' which had not attained publicity in the churches were soon regarded with mistrust. But in itself there is as yet no reproach attaching to the term—it merely signifies exclusion from public reading in the churches. It was not until a prohibition had been passed against a number of writings presumed to be Apostolic, *on the ground that they were spurious*—thus making the 'spurious'

¹ Canon Laodic. 59, *ἰδιωτικοὶ ψαλμοί*, and later the more general *ἀκανόνιστα βιβλία*.

a majority among the 'secret' or 'separated' writings—that these ideas passed into one another, and Apocryphal came to mean falsely ascribed, lying, dangerous. Thus even the most innocent books, which had never laid claim to Apostolic authorship, but had merely been stripped of their earlier veneration, were now flung aside among the Apocrypha; and from the fourth century onwards the Church considered it her duty to hinder the reading of the Apocrypha, and to this end to draw up lists of the Apocryphal books. The most famous of these lists is the 'Decretum de recipiendis et non recipiendis Libris,'¹ which is ascribed to the Popes Damasus,² Gelasius,³ and Hormisdas,⁴ and exists in several recensions. This is the original form—disfigured by many gross errors—of an 'Index Librorum prohibitorum,' for the authors did not confine themselves to Biblical and pseudo-Biblical books either in their lists of acceptable or prohibited writings. *Apocryphal*, however, remained the general title given to everything which was rejected, and soon meant simply heretical. The use of the word in the Lutheran Church, which describes Apocryphal books as those 'which do not belong to the Holy Scriptures, but which are useful and good to read,' is connected with its use in the early Church; unfortunately, in ecclesiastical language all the different meanings of the word have been retained: (1) secretly propagated (according to Priscillian), (2) not suitable for public reading in the church, (3) spurious (not by the reputed authors, or not entirely by them), and (4) heretical.

The differences in the form of quotation from the Old and New Testaments which were noticed as still existing about the year 200, disappeared soon after, owing to the feeling of unity between the Old and the New. The 'New Testament' formed with the Old an inseparable whole, united with it under the name of the Scripture, or the Divine Scripture, or more rarely in the plural. So much has *γραφή*, Scripture, become the name of the Bible, that Old or New Testament quotations are introduced as *γραφικαὶ μαρτυρίαι*, Scriptural testimony. Also the Old and New Scriptures are spoken of in the same sense as

¹ A text in Preuschen; *vid. sup.* p. 459.

² † 384.

³ † 496.

⁴ † 523.

the Old and New Testaments, and in the innumerable instances to be found in Christian literature after 375, in which the substantive is omitted (only ἡ παλαιά—ἡ καινή) it is impossible to say whether we are to understand 'Scripture' or 'Covenant.' The term 'books' (Divine, Ancient, and so forth) appears much more seldom among both Greeks and Latins. The word 'biblia' ('sacra') in the singular, from which the word 'Bible' is derived, originated in the later Middle Ages.

3. Every trace of growth—nay, of being the product of growth—appears to have been removed from the New Testament for centuries; even as early as the year 500 such traces are only to be recognised by the keenest scrutiny: externally, all appendages appear utterly rejected; internally, the various distinctions of class and degree are one and all swept away. But this latter is in reality an illusion. It has never been possible in practice to give to all the New Testament Books the same position. Chrysostom, the very man who feels obliged to put in a good word for the Epistle to Philemon, lets us see how lightly the Acts were often valued, and that to some readers they were almost unknown. A Western confuter of heresy, who is indignant because the heretics reject several of the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles, and also the Apocalypse, does not even mention their small regard for the Catholic Epistles. The Church—I do not speak of individual enthusiasts—has *never* considered the Apocalypse to be as important as the Epistle to the Romans, nor Mark as important as Matthew, nor the Catholic Epistles as the Pauline. Wherever we look, whether to their employment in dogmatic discussions, to their use in the Liturgy, or to the claims made on them for family edification, the difference between the individual documents, judged with particular reference to their bulk, has *always* been enormous. It is astonishing how far, on the whole, the Church has judged aright: the Gospels, which she completed first, are read a thousand times more often than the writings of the Apostles; and Matthew, which was the first to be universally received, is the most important book that exists. Those documents which were added last—the Antilegomena of Eusebius—and which were only introduced on

the hesitating reflection of later generations, are those which have least to offer to the Christian world. The healthy manner in which the new book was allowed to grow up is one of the main reasons why, in defiance of the Church's equalising dogma of inspiration, religious energy dared again and again to exercise choice within the Canon, and to distinguish the 'essential books' from straw and stubble—why in fact Christianity, although a book-religion from the first, has nevertheless remained 'Life.' The incontestable facts of the history of the New Testament Canon are themselves the safeguard against all danger lest this Canon might become—and remain—an oppressive yoke instead of a support.

PART III

A HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXT

CHAPTER I

§ 48. *The Original Manuscripts*

[Cf. O. von Gebhardt's article entitled 'Bibeltext des N. T.'s' in the 'Protestantische Real-Encyclopädie' (1897), vol. ii. pp. 728-773. Also E. Nestle, 'Einführung in das griechische N. T.' (1899); Scrivener, 'A plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament,' in 2 vols. (1894), and C. R. Gregory, 'Textkritik des N. T.'s,' vol. i. (1900). In this section we must borrow largely from that branch of philological science known as palaeography. A French scholar named B. de Montfaucon, a Benedictine of the Congregation of St. Maur,¹ was really the creator of this science with his 'Palaeographia Graeca,' pub. in 1708 and the following year. Palaeographical studies have now flourished for several decades, and the material has thus been enormously increased, but even so Montfaucon's work is not yet out of date. S. Gardthausen gives a comprehensive presentation of the subject in his 'Griechische Paläographie' (Leipzig, 1879). Consult also T. Birt: 'Das antike Buchwesen in seinem Verhältnis zur Literatur' (Berlin, 1882); E. Rhode in the 'Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen' for 1882, pp. 1537-63, and Dziatzko's article on 'Das Buch' in the 'Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft,' published in Pauly-Wissowa, vol. iii. pp. 939-971.]

1. The original documents² from the hands of the New Testament authors themselves were all lost at a very early date. It is true that an unknown chronicler, writing in the fourth century at earliest, informs us that the original MS.

¹ Died in 1741.

² αὐτόγραφα or ἰδιόχειρα.

of John was preserved at Ephesus; at Prague and Venice it was claimed until late in the eighteenth century that the original of Mark's Gospel was preserved at both those places—the fact that it was in Latin being overlooked—and A. Scholz, in his 'Biblichkritische Reise' (1823) tells of a supposed autographon of Matthew in Laodicea. These are mere idle inventions, for if the spokesmen of the Church could have brought forward any original Apostolic manuscript in their struggle against heresy, especially against the 'falsifier' Marcion, they might have spared themselves much trouble and long dispute as to what was genuine and what was not. When Tertullian appeals to the *authentic* writings of the Apostles as they were still read out in the churches of Corinth, Rome and Ephesus,¹ he probably means the unaltered Text as opposed to that 'emendated' by the Gnostics, or else we should perhaps rate his testimony in favour of those writings as a mere rhetorical phrase, like his 'thrones of the Apostles.' But it is always possible to obtain a clear idea of the nature of those original manuscripts through our knowledge of what was the appearance of books and letters of that time, for the New Testament authors would naturally have conformed to the usage of their age and their surroundings in all the literary apparatus they employed.²

2. A wooden tablet smeared with wax, such as the dumb priest Zacharias had brought to him in order to write the name 'John' in the soft material for the son of his old age,³ was not sufficient for the purposes of a serious writer; for books as well as for letters of a certain length, an artificial product was used which was prepared from the Egyptian papyrus shrub and resembled our paper, which derives its name from it. The *Cyperus papyrus* (πάπυρος) once grew in great quantities in the Delta of the Nile, as well as in certain places in Syria and Palestine, and even in Sicily. Its pith (βύβλος) was cut into fine strips, and after skilful preparation formed a material suitable for the purposes of writing.⁴ The further requirements for writing were: (1) a pen, i.e. the specially prepared stalk of

¹ *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, ch. xxxvi.

² See Hilary: 'Communis apostolorum elementorum atque apicum forma est.'

³ Luke i. 63.

⁴ ὁ χάρτης, 2. John 12.

a reed (κάλαμος),¹ which had to be cut into shape almost as in the case of our ancient goose-quill (so that a penknife² was also indispensable to the writer), and which was likewise chiefly to be found in Egypt; and (2) some ink (τὸ μέλαν),³ which was introduced into the cane by means of a piece of wool, and was prepared from soot, vitriol, and similar substances. The individual papyrus leaves (σελίδες or columns⁴) were of different sizes according to the needs and wishes of those who bought them; their average size, however, might be laid down as about one hand-breadth in width and not quite twice as much in length. A single leaf of this kind was quite sufficient for accounts, contracts and short notes, such as have been preserved to us in very large numbers, but for compositions of greater length several of them had to be fastened together. This was done from left to right, the left edge of the second leaf being glued to the right edge of the first, and so on. Sheets made in this manner, which were often very long, were only written upon on the upper side. Those written upon on both sides (τὰ ἔμπροσθεν καὶ τὰ ὀπίσω γεγραμμένα⁵) belong, like many extraordinary things, to the visionary machinery of Ezekiel and the Apocalypse. A space of one finger-breadth at least must have been left blank at the edge of each leaf, if only to provide means for sticking them together, but even apart from this consideration a margin would have been made on æsthetic grounds to right and left, as well as above and below. Short letters were rolled firmly together, a thread fastened round them to which the seal could be conveniently attached, and the address written on the outside.⁶ But with writings of greater length, or those intended for frequent perusal (βίβλοι or βιβλία), a cylindrical stick was fastened to the edge of the last leaf, with its ends sticking out above and below, and the upper end, at any rate, usually adorned with a knob. Several leaves together were then rolled round this stick in such a manner that the written part was always inside, that of the last leaf lying directly against the stick, while the outer

¹ 3. John 13.² τὸ ξυρὸν τοῦ γραμματέως, Jer. xxxvi. 23.³ 2. Cor. iii. 3.⁴ Jer. *ibid.*⁵ Ezek. ii. 10, and possibly Rev. v. 1.⁶ E.g., Ἀπολλωνίῳ στ τῷ πατρὶ Πτολεμαίῳ.

cover was formed by the first leaf, though only its unwritten side was exposed to the dust.

The whole was cylindrical in shape, and, to prevent it from unrolling, straps were fastened to the outside leaf, knotted together, and if necessary, also sealed. The reader would then proceed first to untie the straps, and then to unroll one leaf after the other, from right to left, holding the roller in his right hand; another stick would usually be attached to the first leaf, round which the roll would gradually wind itself after being read—this time with the writing outside; and thus the reader would hold a roll in each hand, one containing the part of the book already done with, the other that still unfinished, and between the two, straight before his eyes, the leaf with which he was busy at the moment. Naturally, some rolls were very small and some gigantic, and it is probably the idea of a huge roll of this kind that underlies ver. xviii. 5 of the Apocalypse. A convenient medium size seems, however, to have become usual long before the time of Christ, through the influence of Alexandrian scholars and booksellers. Papyrus is not a particularly durable material, and yet not only have countless little notes, but even a few genuine rolls, been preserved down to our own time under the ashes of Herculaneum and in the sand of Egypt. In the New Testament the book-roll (*εἰλητόν*=*volumen*) is not directly mentioned, but ver. vii. 14 of the Apocalypse shows that books were thought of as rolls, and the *κεφαλὴ βιβλίου* quoted by the author of Hebrews¹ from Psalm xl.² can only be translated by 'the roll of the book'; it means properly 'the little head of the book,' a designation for the knob by which the roll was drawn out of its cover and held while being read, and then became, by a natural synecdoché, the name for the roll itself.

Papyrus was not the only writing-material known in the time of the Apostles. The Jews had Thora-rolls of leather (*διφθέρα*), and held obstinately to the custom of using them long after rolls had been given up by every other nation. But in the Greek world, too, parchment began to rival papyrus as early as the second century before Christ. Parchment is a substance

¹ Verse x. 7.

² Verse 7, and see also Ezekiel ii. 9.

obtained by tanning and otherwise skilfully preparing the hides of animals—those of asses or antelopes yielding the best quality—and many conclude from its name, *περγαμηνή*, that it was invented by the inhabitants of Pergamus, though, indeed, a much older and more commonly used word for it was *μεμβράνα*, borrowed from the Latin. But parchment was more costly than papyrus, and the New Testament writers would scarcely have used it for their works. If indeed, as we are told in 2. Timothy iv. 13, Paul possessed certain *μεμβράναι* among the books left behind at Troas, these parchments would certainly not have been original copies of the New Testament writings, still less his own notebooks or memoranda, but were most probably copies of the sacred books of the Old Testament, which the Jew would certainly have procured in a more costly form.

3. It is scarcely probable that the Uncial¹ handwriting which we find in ancient inscriptions and in the earliest parchment codices of the fourth century, was employed in the *autographa* of the New Testament. Even though their authors may not have been practised shorthand writers (*ταχυγράφοι*, *notarii*), they would yet have had no cause to employ an *écriture de luxe* for their modest records. Moreover, the ordinary handwriting of those days was cursive, a form in which the letters were joined together and abbreviations were plentifully used, so that both time and paper were saved. This style of handwriting was certainly not the most convenient for the reader, for it might easily give rise to misunderstandings, if, say, an abbreviation were wrongly interpreted; but so long as the Uncial form, innocent as it was of any distinction between small and capital letters, of punctuation, or of any signs whatever, clung to the *scriptio continua*, i.e. the handwriting without any intervals between the words, fluent reading was there too an art that required some learning. Nor would even Luke have had calligraphers at his disposal who would undertake to clear and simplify all his involved constructions, or even those professional correctors who prided themselves on polishing the manuscripts committed to them of all their mistakes.

¹ From *uncia* = an inch, referring to the original size of the letter.

copy of the New Testament Books. This propagation and multiplication of the texts was much increased after the fourth century, partly because, owing to the favour of the Emperors, countless new communities arose, extending even into the remotest villages, and partly because the monasteries not only needed a number of copies for themselves, but made a labour of love of the preparation of new MSS., believing it to be a work pleasing to God. Nevertheless, we must beware of accepting exaggerated estimates of the number of New Testament manuscripts existing and circulating at the same time; before the Reformation the idea that it was the daily duty of every Christian to read his Bible did not exist, and Birt's assertion that 'the Bible must have been obtainable at a low price, since it was the indispensable possession of every member of a community, even of the very poorest,' is an enormous exaggeration. It was the exception for individual laymen to possess the Books of the Bible, and even the clergy only possessed them as their private property in very few cases. Naturally, however, each community would have been anxious to obtain complete copies, at any rate of the New Testament, for the use of its church, but nowhere and at no time was this desire fulfilled in the case of every little village church. A complete 'bibliotheca sacra' was only to be found in those places where scholarly activity and ecclesiastical interest met, and in the language of the Church 'bibliotheca' came to be understood as the whole body of the 'Scriptures,' together with the traditional apparatus of commentaries and introductions. Nevertheless, no book in all the world's literature can approach the New Testament in the number of copies, both of the original text and of all manner of translations, which have been made of it.

2. But even after the New Testament was completed, all its parts were by no means propagated in equal quantities. The four Gospels on the one hand, and on the other the fourteen Pauline Epistles, are those which hang together most firmly, nor is it at all usual for the Catholic Epistles—wherever their number is known and fixed—to appear singly; but the Acts and more especially the Apocalypse often form

complete volumes by themselves, or, if not, they are bound up with the Pauline or the Catholic Epistles. The Apocalypse has even been met with in a volume of Patristic Tracts. But separate versions of the complete New Testament, like those we possess in countless printed editions, are not to be found in manuscript; the parchment codices which embrace all the books of the New Testament without exception (like the Sinaiticus) contain the whole Bible, with the New Testament and occasionally a few other books for church reading forming the last volume (as in the Alexandrinus). Elaborately written copies of the sacred writings sometimes extend to as many as twelve volumes. This fact is confirmed by overwhelming evidence from ecclesiastical literature; the far more frequent use of plural than of singular designations¹ shows that, as far as outward form was concerned, the idea of unity did not exist; and we read, for instance, in the protocol of a disputation between Augustine and the Manichæan Felix, that the former takes the Codex of the Gospel in his hand (here we find unity once more, for τὸ εὐαγγέλιον is the usual name for the four Gospel writings: not till later does pedantry prefer τετραεὐαγγέλιον), reads something from it, gives it back again, and calls for the book of the Acts in order to read a passage from it in like manner.

Ancient manuscripts of the Gospels are fairly plentifully preserved (we possess nearly one hundred codices in the Uncial hand), but the case is less favourable with the Pauline and Catholic Epistles and the Acts, while the Apocalypse is extremely poorly represented. In the later Middle Ages the books for reading aloud, or lectionaries, were almost more widely distributed than the New Testament Scriptures themselves; they were made to suit the convenience of the priests, and only contained the passages (*pericopæ*) intended for public reading, and arranged according to the order of the ecclesiastical year. Their history begins with the sixth century, and there was naturally very considerable variation among them, since the length of the *pericopæ* might be, and indeed was, very different in different cases. It was quite exceptional to unite the Evangelic readings in a single volume

¹ As τὰ βιβλία, *sacrae sanctae scripturae, libri canonici* etc.

with the Apostolic (i.e. those taken from the Acts and the Epistles), but where this was done it was called an *ἀποστολο-εὐαγγέλιον*. The collections from the Gospels are often merely called *εὐαγγέλιον*, or else *εὐαγγελιάριον* or *εὐαγγελιστάριον* (but a sharp distinction cannot be drawn between these terms); those from Apostolic writings, simply *ἀπόστολος* or *πραξαπόστολος*; but these are rarer and generally of later origin than the Gospel collections. Of course extracts from the New Testament found admission into other liturgical MSS.; but this does not interest us here, because it did not influence the multiplication of the New Testament and is altogether without importance for the history of the text, since no fresh material can be expected among such common market ware.

§ 50. *The Outward Form of the Texts down to about 1500 A.D.*

[Cf. for this and the following sections C. R. Gregory's 'Prolegomena' in C. Tischendorf's 'Novum Testamentum Græce,' ed. 8, vol. iii. (1884, 1890 and 1894.)]

1. The exact time at which papyrus gave way to parchment as writing-material for the sacred books cannot now be determined. It probably happened at different times in different places—in Egypt naturally later than elsewhere: but soon after the Mohammedan invasion in the seventh century, papyrus seems even there to have disappeared entirely, even from domestic use. At any rate, all that Theodorus of Mopsuestia, who died in 428, knows of it, is that many years ago, in the time of Paul, men possessed the Divine Scriptures in the form of rolls. Jerome tells us that between 340 and 380 the bishops of Cæsarea saved the library formed in that place by Origen and Pamphilus from decay by laboriously transcribing everything it contained on to parchment. Thus the greater part of this library must originally have consisted of papyrus rolls, and we may probably consider the period about 300 as that of the general

transition to the use of parchment. In the persecution of Diocletian it is in almost every case the *codices* of the Divine Law which are sought for by the authorities and given up by cowardly Christians; if in later times the 'volumina' are still spoken of, it only means that the old name had been retained for the new thing.

It was, in fact, very difficult to convert stiff parchment, ill adapted as it was to the process of gluing, into rolls; the usual practice was to fold the leaves over in the middle, and then to lay several of them one inside the other, or one on the top of the other; booklets thus produced could be fastened together by the binder in any desired number, making a volume resembling the form of our present books.¹ As a rule, such a folio consisted of four double leaves (*quaternio*) and more rarely of five; one, two, or three were scarcely ever used except at the end of a book, when a complete folio was not needed. Both sides were written on, and thus it consisted on an average of sixteen pages, like a printer's sheet of to-day. Some particularly strong material, such as wood, sometimes covered with leather or silk, was chosen for the binding of the folios, which, when put together, were often very thick; for the finely dressed parchment of ancient times now disappears for the sake of greater durability. The fact that economical owners were often tempted to make more than one use of their parchment is in a sense a misfortune, but often turns out the reverse. If a library already contained several copies of the New Testament, but not the works of some revered father of the Church, the addition was made without expense by scratching out the original writing (in case it was not already faded enough) in one of the New Testament parchments, and writing the desired text over the old, or between the lines, or occasionally, but not often, crosswise. Such manuscripts are called Palimpsests (*codices rescripti*, and sometimes even *bis rescripti*). The original writing, which can often only be made legible by means of chemical reagents, is generally the most interesting to us; whatever fragments we possess of the Gothic translation of the New Testament and of the oldest Syriac version of the Gospels

¹ τεῦχος, πικτίον, σωματίον, in Latin = *codex*.

have come down to us for the most part from 'Codices rescripti.' On the other hand, from the fourth century onwards the Bible manuscripts were often prepared with extravagant splendour; parchment of marble whiteness and of the greatest delicacy was procured, gold and silver letters were painted on a ground of purple—as in the 'Codex Argenteus' of the Gothic translation of the Gospels at Upsala—and the cover richly adorned with jewels and fitted with costly clasps; while the decorations which were inserted in the margins of the manuscripts, especially at the beginning of the book, belong to the most valuable material for the history of Christian Art.

Paper, a cheaper writing-material than parchment, at last took its place in the cultivated world about the shores of the Mediterranean; it was apparently invented by the Chinese, and made out of linen rags. It was known to the Greeks as early as the eighth century, and from this time onwards leaves of linen, as formerly of papyrus, are to be met with between the parchment pages. The traditional material, however, was long preferred for New Testament manuscripts. It was not till after the fourteenth century that the parchment manuscripts disappeared entirely, and the 'Codices bombycini,' and 'chartacei' replaced the 'Codices membranacei,' though retaining in all other respects the appearance of the older books.

2. When the Emperor Constantine commissioned Bishop Eusebius of Cæsarea to provide him with fifty copies of the Holy Scriptures for the newly built churches of his capital on the Bosphorus, he expressly desired that they should be very legible and of a convenient size for general use. In the latter respect tastes and necessities varied with the times, but in general the tendency to a decrease in size is unmistakable in the history of the codices. When Jerome bewailed the unwieldy bulk of the codices then in vogue he was probably not thinking only of their thickness. Among the parchment manuscripts still extant we may find examples of the large folio, the quarto, and the small and dainty octavo—the last a sign of a comparatively modern age. The manuscripts we possess of the Greek New Testament never, so far as we know,

exceed a size of 18 inches in height by 16 in breadth; a very general medium size is 12 by 8. The parchment pages were originally considerably higher than the average of those made of papyrus, and also of correspondingly greater breadth; thus if the copyist still wished to keep to the usual length of the lines on a papyrus page, and was yet unwilling to leave such enormous margins unused, he simply divided each page of the parchment into several columns, clearly separated from one another by a small space: the Sinaiticus has four such columns, the Vaticanus three, but it is more usual to find only two. Even some of the quite ancient manuscripts, however, have their lines running across from margin to margin, and when it became the custom to cover the text with all manner of auxiliary apparatus, equally wide margins were needed for every portion, so that this also contributed to the abandonment of the older fashion.

3. A change in the nature of the writing-materials, however, need not necessarily have brought about a change in the characters used. Not until the ninth century are the uncial letters, which had been retained until then, supplanted by the cursive hand, but even then in such a manner that the conservatism of the Church long clung to the older custom—in fact, until late in the eleventh century—as is proved by a great number of lectionaries. The cursive hand is also called the Minuscule, and the uncial the Majuscule. But it is not principally the height or even the general size of the single letters which makes the distinction between the two methods of writing; large and coarsely written minuscules on the one hand, and very fine and delicate uncials on the other, are not uncommon. Naturally, moreover, the change did not come about without some preparation. The uncial writing had gradually dropped more and more of its old beautiful features, the letters had become narrower and more pointed, and had begun to slant to one side; the practice of joining several letters together was growing commoner; the differences in length—as for instance between Iota and Rho—increased; we find in fact that a semi-uncial hand was developing. In the case of the cursive hand still more, almost a new alphabet had at last been produced; we can still perceive its relationship

to the original form of the letter, but everything has become smoother, partly through abbreviation and partly through the separation of words, though always with the tendency to make the fewest possible strokes, and to lift the pen as seldom as possible. This form of writing, too, underwent many developments; it borrowed again and again from the old uncial letters, and it is the foundation of our modern Greek hand. It is not the fault of the cursive hand, but of its innumerable abbreviations, that the manuscripts of the later Middle Ages are in general so difficult to read; whole words are often represented in them by a single hieroglyph, while in the old manuscripts such abbreviations are but rarely found, and then only in the case of constantly recurring words (e.g. $\overline{\text{KN}}$ for $\overline{\text{κύριον}}$, $\overline{\text{AN}}\Omega$ for $\overline{\text{ἀνθρώπου}}$, $\overline{\text{ΠNA}}$ for $\overline{\text{πνεύμα}}$). With the minuscule, again, it now becomes the rule to separate the words by dots or by a space, and to insert punctuation and signs; but after the eighth century these are also found in uncial codices, and are apparently not merely the insertions of a later hand. Individual scribes well versed in the rules of grammar made accented copies (*κατὰ προσφδίαν*) of the Books of the Bible as early as the fourth and fifth centuries, but this attempt had no permanent success.

Most of the good codices are carefully and evenly written; the scribe drew lines to help himself (and in the case of fine parchment it was only necessary to do this on one side), sometimes single ones, in which case the letters were merely written upon them, and sometimes double, when they were inserted between the two; the space between two such rows would then be about equal to the height of the row itself. The number of rows on each page depended on the shape of the codex and the copyist's manner of writing: in the Sinaiticus there are 48 on a page; in the Vaticanus, although it is much less in height, 42; in the Codex H of the Pauline Epistles, 16, although it is about an inch higher than the Vaticanus; in the codex Δ of the Gospels, the number varies between 17 and 25. A single column of the Sinaiticus takes on an average about 12 letters, of the Vaticanus about 17, of the Alexandrinus about 21, of the Codex Ephraemi S about 40; thus, counting the columns together, there are respectively

48, 51, 42, and 40 letters on each line. As the line represents a mere unit of space (and not of sense), words are sometimes broken off at the end of them without a hyphen, e.g. *παρασμων*, but this hardly ever occurs in the middle of a syllable.

4. But scarcely a single writer of the New Testament manuscripts known to us was content to reproduce his original without any regard to the meaning of the text—that is, without giving his readers some assistance towards the understanding of it. At the beginning of a new paragraph the Sinaiticus makes the first letter project into the left-hand margin, and from the fifth century onwards it became usual to distinguish these initial letters by their special size as well—later even to paint them with some colour, mostly red. Then from the single letter several came to be treated in this way, till at last the whole first word was coloured. But the needs of the reader (and of the church reader in particular) were met comparatively early by a much more comprehensive plan. The New Testament text was split up into a series of sense-units, written in such a manner that the beginning and end of each unit must be clearly perceptible, whether it filled the space of one or more actual lines. This was, however, a costly undertaking, as by this method half lines and more had constantly to be left blank; and indeed it was probably on this account that the system disappeared, even before a better substitute was found for it in a rational system of punctuation. This Colometric¹ method of writing appears to have been introduced into the sacred literature of the Greeks by Origen—at first only for the Psalms, in which the nature of Hebrew poetry determined the limits of the sentences automatically. Thus in his 'Hexapla' he could give a comprehensive view of all the seven different Greek translations beside the original text. When Jerome had his Latin translation of Isaiah written out in separate versicles of this sort ('per cola et commata'—and even Cassiodorus made the mistake of applying the words to the punctuation-marks so named in modern times!) he warned his

¹ A κῶλον, according to Augustine, *De Doctr. Chr.* iv. 7 = Lat. *membrum*, phrase.

Episcopi Sulcensis Actuum Apostolorum et xiv Sancti Pauli aliarumque Catholicarum Epistolarum editio ad Athanasium juniorem Episcop. Alex. . . . graece et latine edita.' Also J. A. Robinson's article on 'Euthaliana' in 'Texts and Studies,' iii. 3, 1895; and E. von Dobschütz on 'Euthaliusstudien' in the 'Zeitschrift für die Kirchengeschichte,' part xix. 1898, pp. 107 fol., and on 'Euthalius' in the 'Protestantische Real-Encyclopädie' (edited by Hauck), part v. 1898.]

5. But the New Testament text was not only copied out in more or less practical form; as in the Masoretic version of the Old, it underwent a peculiar form of elaboration, and was in fact surrounded by a mass of auxiliary notes of all kinds. I am not referring here to the 'Catenae' (see pp. 599 fol.), although in the later Middle Ages scarcely a single Greek text of the New Testament was allowed to appear without them; nor to the increasingly copious postscripts giving information as to the original language and the author of each document, and the place and time of its composition; nor to the tables of contents¹ at the beginnings, and all the later amplifications of the older and shorter superscriptions.² In addition to these a learned apparatus of the most diverse character and value was added to the text, and vestiges of this are still to be found even in the latest printed editions.

In this sphere of activity the master and pioneer appeared until recently to be a certain Euthalius of Alexandria, whose work was dated by its first editor, Zaccagni, at 458. The mystery in which this remarkable book used to be wrapped is not yet quite cleared away, but, owing to the searching investigations of Robinson and von Dobschütz in particular, we now possess the certain knowledge that the Euthalius of Zaccagni did not constitute a literary entity at all, but was a compilation put together by different hands from materials belonging to different periods, practically complete as early as the fourth century, though enlarged even after the year 600 by additions from other sources. Whether a Euthalius was at least one of the revisers—possibly the editor of the year 396—remains an open question until these manu-

¹ ὑποθέσεις.

² E.g., instead of πράξεις ἀποστόλων, πράξεις τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων, and later still 'written by the holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke.'

scripts have been more accurately and fully examined, for then only will it be possible to determine his share in the work of compilation. The very diverse elements that go to make up the *Corpus Euthalianum* are held together by one interest only—that of presenting the Apostolic writings to the Church conveniently arranged and adapted for study, according to the approved models of Greek scholastic learning. We do not yet know whether the text which the so-called Euthalius used as the foundation for his work was a particularly good one; but in any case he wrote it in ‘sense-units’ from beginning to end, furnished it with stichometry, carefully identified all the quotations to be found in it, both sacred and profane, prepared indices for these quotations, and made the consultation of them easy by a complicated system of inserting figures in the margin opposite the place containing the quotation. In addition to all this he contributed short prefaces to the Epistles, chronological sketches of the life and death of Paul, and other embryonic attempts at an ‘Introduction to the New Testament.’

But probably the most useful part of all this work was his division of the Acts and the Epistles into longer and shorter sections. The Acts, for instance, we find divided into forty chapters (*κεφάλαια*), of which the first and second together form what is now our first, and the third our present second. In most of these, again, subdivisions (*ὑποδιαίρεσεις*) are added, always beginning lower down than the beginning of the chapter proper; e.g., in the Euthalian chapter iii. they begin at what are now verses ii. 14, ii. 17, ii. 22, ii. 37, and ii. 42. The numbers of these sections are again noted on the margin of the text, by means of red pigment. But the indices to the chapters and sections do not consist in simple numbering, or in the mere giving of the initial words, but an attempt is made in them—and by no means unskillfully—to summarise the contents. The seventh chapter of Romans, for instance (verses vi. 1–23 in our version), is thus described: ‘Concerning the good conduct which ought to accompany faith’; chapter xvii. (=vv. xii. 1–3) thus, ‘Injunctions concerning virtue towards God and men’; section *a* (vv. xii. 3 fol.) thus, ‘On concord’; section *δ*

(vv. xiii 1 fol.) thus, 'On obedience to the higher powers.' Lastly, considerably larger sections are formed by putting together several chapters to make one lesson (*ἀνάγνωσις*).¹ These, too, are of very varying length, but the author of these old pericopae evidently had the object in view of dividing the whole body of the Apostolic writings into Lessons embracing a complete ecclesiastical year of fifty-seven services.

This ideal could never be maintained in the public worship of the communities, and thus the Lessons of Euthalius never attained any very wide acceptance. But his chapters and all the rest of his arrangements played all the more important a part in the Greek and Syriac Bibles. He never won complete and sole recognition, however—still less in the case of the Acts and Catholic Epistles than in that of Paul—and the Gospels, which he never touched, had already been satisfactorily arranged in chapters before his day.

The Latins gave the name of *breves* to what the Greeks called *κεφάλαια* (and also *τίτλοι*, *περιοχαί*, and *περικοπαί*), a word which had at first undoubtedly signified the summary of contents at the beginning of the chapters, and was not applied until later to the chapters themselves. The now universally adopted system of division was introduced in the beginning of the thirteenth century by Stephen Langton, Chancellor of the University of Paris, principally for the sake of convenience in quotation and reference, and with this object he aimed at as close a similarity as possible between the lengths of the chapters. This innovation soon made its way into all Latin Bible-manuscripts; and as it was in the West too that the first printed versions of the Greek Bible appeared, it naturally followed that the approved arrangement should also have been introduced into those versions. The fact that in an arrangement so indispensable in our eyes to the scientific and edificatory use of the Scriptures, unity was not attained until after a thousand years of diversity, can only be explained by the circumstances of the times; we can, in fact, barely understand that up to the end of the fourth century such divisions were dispensed with altogether; for when earlier writers, such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, or Dionysius of

¹ Acts has 16 Cath. Ep. 10; Pauline Ep. 13.

Alexandria, speak of *Pericopae* and chapters in connection with New Testament Books, they only mean divisions according to the sense, which the observant reader perceived to be wholes complete in themselves, but which need not for that reason have been marked upon the text. And in fact that they were not so marked can be proved from the language of Jerome.

Eusebius, who was the first to undertake the subdivision of the four Gospels (he made 1162 chapters out of them), did so with the sole object of giving the reader a synoptic survey of the parallel passages within them. To accomplish this, therefore, he seeks and carefully marks out the passages in each Gospel for which parallel passages can be found in the three others, in two of them, or in one, or for which there are no parallels at all; then counts up the sections thus obtained in each case (e.g., 355 for Matthew, 232 for John), some of which are infinitesimal, and others (especially in John) of considerable length, and prepares a table of ten rubrics (*κατόνες*), in the first of which he sets down the passages common to all four Gospels, in the second those common to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and so on. The tenth gives those passages peculiar to Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, in four separate columns. When the numbers of these chapters as well as those of the rubric to which each belonged were correctly noted in the margins, it would not be difficult to obtain a synoptic view of any given portion of the Gospels with tolerable rapidity and with sufficient accuracy to satisfy the demands of that age. The plan of this work, of which Eusebius speaks in his dedication to Carpianus, had occurred to him while making use of a 'Diatessaron' by Ammonius of Alexandria¹; this man had wished to attain the same end—though at the expense of Mark, Luke, and John—by adding to the complete text of Matthew the corresponding sections from the other Evangelists. Unfortunately, this Eusebian apparatus was too complicated to be handed on without corruption, and a few mistakes would have vitiated it all; but it is characteristic of the conservatism of the Church that almost all the Gospel manuscripts from the sixth to the sixteenth century possess it,

¹ Probably about 250.

although all interest in these comparative studies had long died out. Far more useful to the clerical owner were the marginal notes, *α* (*ἀρχή*) and *τ* (*τέλος*), which marked the beginning and the end of the Lessons for Sundays, Saints' days and festivals, and are regularly found in all New Testament manuscripts after the ninth century, while accurate indices of these pericopae may also be found attached to them.

All this supplementary matter, which bears witness to the labour of the Church on the sacred text, does not deserve special attention on account of its possible value in the history of the Church, of literature, or of culture—for no very excessive intelligence, after all, went to the production of it—but it is often full of significance for the history of the New Testament Text, as giving useful indications concerning the origin, antiquity, birthplace and mutual relationship of the different manuscripts. As a rule, it is the mistakes it contains which render the best services in this respect.

§ 51. *The Material History of the Text down to
about 1500 A.D.*

1. The history of the New Testament text during this period is the history of its corruption, or at the best of futile attempts to stay its corruption. Wherever the reproduction of documents of some length is not carried out by mechanical means, but by individual labour, the copy will always vary in some degree from the original; every new copy brings with it new mistakes, and when we consider the enormous number of manuscripts in which we possess the New Testament Books, it is no wonder that the whole body of the texts can only be shown to agree in a few words here and there. The painful anxiety about every letter and every apostrophe, with which Judaism propagated the Masoretic text of the Old Testament, was never the portion of the New (whose Masoretes, in fact, did not arise until 1590-92); in the important period, the first centuries, the words were handled with a freedom incomprehensible to us; and when the sacredness of the letter had at last impressed itself upon the universal consciousness—even of the copyist—and men

set themselves seriously to reproduce the text of the codices they had before them as correctly as possible, and to eliminate mistakes by comparing their copies afresh with the originals or with other ancient manuscripts, it was too late; they only succeeded in securing a position of authority for an already corrupted text.

The variants (different readings) are most numerous in the Gospels, precisely because these were the most frequently copied, and extend to punctuation marks, letters, words, phrases, sentences, and even entire sections; they consist, moreover, in substitution, transposition, omission or addition, and arose for the most part unintentionally, but also (and this is a distinction full of importance for our purpose) by design, these latter being by far the older and the more significant. Many readings may be recognised as mistakes at the first glance; on the other hand, there are many cases in which it is very difficult, if not impossible, to decide whether they are the original readings or have been introduced by some scribe. Complaints about the stupidity of the copyists date from the earliest times and are particularly loud in the West (see, for instance, Cassiodorus), because in their intercourse with Greek scholars, the Latins could not help noticing the great difference between their texts and the Greek. Jerome says somewhere that *every* manuscript possessed a separate text. But even Origen can no longer show a naïve faith in *one* definite manuscript; he is familiar with the manifold sources of corruption, and can only hope to get back to the Apostolic original by a comparison of several different texts. Nor can Augustine himself¹ deny that in some places the variants in the copies of the Scriptures affected the very sense, the train of thought; although indeed he was sufficiently optimistic to hope that the uncertainty might be removed by the methodical work of theologians. It matters little whether there are 30,000 or 100,000 variants in the New Testament manuscripts; but the fact is of the utmost importance that the Christian Church lived for many centuries in spite of—nay, upon—an

¹ *Contra Faustum*, xi. 2.

exceedingly corrupt sacred text; nor will she ever possess one that is absolutely free from error.

2. The unintentional alterations are, as a rule, the least harmful. Slips of the pen, for instance, such as *δύνανται* for *δύνανται* in Mark ii. 19, have but a very slender chance of establishing themselves. Faults of memory are not generally dangerous, at any rate to the sense, since the copyist probably retained the correct idea, though failing to retain the original expression: such is the encroachment of *ἀνακρίναι* for *διακρίναι* in 1. Cor. vi. 5, or the interchange or simultaneous use of the names Jesus and Christ for the Lord. To this class also belong permutations such as that of 2. Cor. xi. 23, where the reading *ἐν πληγαῖς περισσοτέρως, ἐν φυλακαῖς ὑπερβαλλόντως* is scarcely better attested than *ἐν φυλακαῖς περισσοτέρως, ἐν πληγαῖς ὑπερβαλλόντως*, or *ἐν πληγαῖς ὑπερβαλλόντως, ἐν φυλακαῖς περισσοτέρως*; or variants such as *κάμοι* for *καὶ ἐμοί*, *εὐθύς* for *εὐθέως*, *ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ* for *ὑπερεκπερισσῶς*, *ὅτι* for *διότι*, *πῶς* for *τι*; but the most vexatious of these are the confusions between related prepositions and conjunctions, such as *ἀπό* and *ἐκ*, *περί* and *ὑπέρ*, *γάρ* and *δέ*, *γάρ* and *οὖν*, *δέ* and *οὖν*, *ἄρα* and *διό*—if indeed the conjunction is not entirely omitted or even arbitrarily inserted. Such mistakes as the substitution of the particle *ἄρα* for the participle *ἄρας* in 1. Cor. vi. 15, or of *ἰμειρόμενοι* for *ὁμειρόμενοι*, *ὡς ἑαυτὸν* for *ὡς σεαυτὸν* (an error favoured by the *scriptio continua*), *ὁς* for *θεός* (which when abbreviated was written *θς*), are merely due to inaccurate copying; letters like Θ and Ο, Η and Ν, ΛΑ and Μ were, after all, very easy to confuse in the uncial hand; and when the original was half faded, or perhaps even injured in parts, the scribe could not always avoid making mistakes even by the closest scrutiny. The *χωρὶς θεοῦ* instead of *χάριτι θεοῦ* in Heb. ii. 9, may be due to such an error in reading. We seldom find one line transposed for another, but very frequently one line, or even part of a line, altogether omitted, more especially when the similar ending of two lines caused the eye to stray from the second to the first or from the upper to the lower. This is termed ‘homoioteleuta,’ and its correlative is ‘dittography’—the writing of the same word or portion of a sentence twice

over, which is a still plainer sign of inattention. Strictly speaking, we ought not to count as alterations a class of variants which have yet had just the same effect—the differences produced between the manuscripts on the introduction of word-division, accentuation (including breathings) and punctuation—though indeed the copyist was usually guided by the traditions of an older exegesis. The word *εἰσελθών*, for instance, admits the reading *εἰς ἐλθών* quite as well as *εἰσελθών*; *αὐτων* might equally well be understood as *αὐτῶν* or as *αὐτῶν*¹; in 1. Thess. iii. 3 Lachmann read *τὸ μηδὲν ἀσαίνεισθαι*, others *τὸ μηδένα σαίνεισθαι*; and the two concluding words of John i. 3 have quite as often been held to be the subject of the first clause of the fourth verse, as to be the nearer definition of the preceding ‘not anything.’

From the very first the copyists bestowed but the smallest attention on the orthographical, dialectical and other similar peculiarities of their texts. They did not go so far as to remodel their originals systematically according to their own handwriting, pronunciation and idiom, but they took no pains to keep them free from such influences; and the result was an extraordinary confusion of forms. Attic correctness may be found side by side with utter barbarism—how hopeless, then, the task of discovering the forms of the original draft! It was but rarely, however, that the meaning of the text suffered injury from this carelessness, and even the strangest deformities may acquire great value in the eyes of the etymologist and the palæographer. Consistency in such things as the placing of the apostrophe, the use of the *νῦ* *ἐφέλκυστικόν*, the doubling of *ρ* after the augment² or the assimilation of consonants in compound words,³ is not to be expected; we find *ζμύρνα* preserved beside *σμύρνα*, *πεῖν* beside *πιεῖν*, *γεννηθῆναι* beside *γενηθῆναι*, *ἡμην* beside *ἦν*, *ἔφθασεν* beside *ἔφθακεν*, *ἀποκτέννει* beside *ἀποκτείνει*, *ὄφελον* beside *ὠφελον*, *ἡνεώχθησαν* beside *ἀνεώχθησαν*, *ἀνοιγῶσι* beside *ἀνοιχθῶσι*, *ἡνοιξεν* beside *ἀνέωξεν*, *ἡνοιγμένους* beside

¹ E.g., 2. Cor. iii. 5.

² E.g., 2. Cor. xi. 25, *εραβδισθην* and *εραβδῶ*.

³ E.g., 2. Cor. iii. 1 : *συνστατικων* and *συστατικων*, or iii. 2 and 3 : *εγγεγραμμενη* and *εγγεγραμμενη*.

ἀνεωγμένους, οἰκοδόμουν beside ᾠκοδόμουν,¹ till at last it remains doubtful in very many cases whether such vulgarisms (including errors of syntax like μή ποτε καταπατήσουσιν for -σωσιν, Matt. vii. 6) should be put down to the author or the copyist. In the reporting of proper names, correctness is still less to be hoped for; in the same verse of the Acts² the different texts have Ρομφαν, Ρομφα, Ρεμφαμ and Ρεφαν, while Σολομῶνος alternates with Σολομῶντος and Ἀσάφ with Ἀσά—in fact in these cases the scribe simply gave the reins to his own proclivities.

A special feature of the late and decadent Greek was the truncation of diphthongs and vowels, termed in some cases 'Itacism.' Scarcely any distinction came to be made in the pronunciation of ω and ο, υ and οι, and after a time none at all between the latter and ι, ει and η; αι and ε also became interchangeable, and closely resembled η. In consequence of this, scribes of inferior culture were obliged to concoct the strangest mixtures of vowels, unless they painfully set themselves to copy their model letter for letter. Thus we find σωσον for σωσων, πираζεται for πειραζετε, προσκλησιν for προσκλησιν, αιτει for ετι, τρεις for τρις, καινοδοξιαν for κενοδοξιαν, ει μη for η μη, υμεις for ημεις and vice versa—all of them proofs that although at first these errors were merely orthographical, they often led to serious injury to the meaning. Even the ἐνυξεν of John xix. 34 could be read by Latin translators as ἤνοιξεν, and the critics are not unanimous to this day as to whether, in Rom. v. 1, the preference should be given to the Indicative ἐχομεν or the Subjunctive ἐχωμεν—a question full of importance for the determination of the Apostle's frame of mind at that time.

The boundary between the intentional and the unintentional alterations cannot be sharply defined; many a thoughtful copyist, taking into consideration the 'Itacism' with which he was familiar, would certainly correct his model with the full intention of so doing, changing an Infinitive Middle into a second person plural and so on; on the other hand, some of the corruptions of the text, to be

¹ Luke xvii. 28.² Acts vii. 43.

discussed later, arise from the fact that in the memory of the scribe, what he had just read became confused with things he had learnt in former days. Moreover, even very serious corruptions might simply arise by chance—when, for instance, a marginal note which the author himself had added as a supplement to his text, was inserted in the wrong place by a careless scribe; or when marginal notes inserted by a former owner as glosses, were then considered to be parts of the text and interpolated in the original—in favourable cases at the right place, but by no means always.

3. But in the case of the New Testament text in particular, it is the *intentional* alterations which have such very great importance—those, namely, which were undertaken with the *intention* of improving it and of removing difficulties, but are not really based on a better text, and follow only the individual taste of the scribe. In my opinion it is not advisable to make an express distinction between these and ‘falsifications,’ since, according to the present standard, all arbitrary emendations of the text must be called ‘falsifications,’ though even the boldest ‘emendators’ of the early times acted in all good faith, believing that what they did was in the interests of the Word of God. It is true that the orthodox ecclesiastical teachers are very fond of reproaching the heretics with having ‘falsified’¹ the Bible text in favour of their own false teaching. Marcion gave some ground for this reproach by his treatment of the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles; but the same accusation is brought against the other Gnostics, as it was once brought against the Jews; Valentinians first and foremost, but also Artemonites, Novatians, Arians, Donatists, and even Nestorians, are all included in the charge. Even within the Church one party attributes such action to the other: Ambrosiaster,² for instance, believes that where the Greek manuscripts differed on any important point from the Latin, the Greeks with their presumptuous frivolity had smuggled in the corrupt reading. It was, of course, convenient to ascribe the fact of any great uncertainty of the

¹ παραχάσσειν, βιβλιογραφεῖν, interpolare, adulterare, violare etc.

² See p. 537.

text to the agency of the Devil; but we are very frequently in a position to prove the injustice of the reproach, for the falsifications attributed to the Nestorians or the Donatists can often be shown to have been variants long before their time. Marcion has actually preserved the correct text (*οὐκ οὐδέ*) in Gal. ii. 5, while Tertullian, who attacks him mercilessly for having interpolated the two words, is in reality the champion of a 'corrected' text. Perhaps the originator of this correction thought it impossible, in view of Acts xvi. 3, that Paul should have disturbed the peace of the Church in Jerusalem by his self-willed obstinacy on a side issue, and accordingly reformed the text in such a manner as, in his opinion, it *must* have run originally. From this naïve conviction that what was dogmatically objectionable or inconvenient *could* not have had a place in Scripture, and must therefore be removed, spring innumerable important variants, particularly from the earlier times, for later on it became the custom to explain such difficulties by exegesis. Dogma alone is responsible for such variants as the following: John i. 18, where, 'The only begotten God' is as well attested as 'The only begotten Son'; Matt. i. 25, where 'her son' is just as authentic as 'her first-born son,' or Luke iii. 22, where in the account of the Baptism the voice from heaven is rendered by one set of texts as 'This day have I begotten thee,' and in another and afterwards undisputed version as 'In thee I am well pleased.' And when the *οὐκ ἀναβαίνω* of John vii. 8, which appears to be an obvious impossibility, is corrected by the substitution of *οὐπω ἀναβαίνω*, or when the words 'All that came before me' of John x. 8, so very welcome as they were to heretics, are made innocuous in two different ways, the intention of the emendator is quite as unmistakable as is his confident belief that so questionable a word could only have found its way into the Bible through the error or the intentional falsification of a scribe.

But yet another motive for intentional alteration of the text is sometimes mentioned by ecclesiastical writers. Origen, not without reason, moralises on the right of solecisms to exist within the Scriptures, and complains of the copyists who, *προφάσει διορθώσεως*—'on the pretext of making a

thorough correction'—altered the texts to suit their own ideas of style and logic. Andrew of Cæsarea,¹ in his Commentary on the Apocalypse, expressly extends the curse in Rev. xx. 18 fol. to the forgers who considered that Attic syntax and a strictly logical train of thought were more convincing and more to be admired than the peculiarities of the Scripture language. What the Fathers meant by this is made clear by an anecdote told by Sozomenos²:—At an assembly of Cypriot bishops about the year 350, one Triphyllios of Ledra, a man of high culture, was addressing the company, and in the saying 'take up thy bed and walk'³ made use of the more refined Attic *σκίμπους* instead of the New Testament *κράβατος*; whereupon a certain Bishop Spyridon sprang up and angrily called to him before the whole assembly: 'Are you, then, better than he who first said *κράβατος* [!] that you are ashamed to use his word?' Again, Tatian tells us that he went through the text of the Pauline Epistles in order to remove the barbarisms and vulgarisms it contained,⁴ and countless scribes, with less system than he, and therefore all the greater danger, copied their originals with more regard for elegance than accuracy: *κατοικοῦντες εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ* is changed into *ἐν Ἱερουσ.*⁵; the unusual *διηποροῦντο* of Acts ii. 12 into *διηπόρουν*; and if the Syrians read *ἡκούσθη ἡ ἀκοή* in Matt. iv. 24, while all the other evidence is in favour of *ἀπ-* or *ἐξ-ἦλθεν ἡ ἀκοή*, the latter might very well be a correction; just as Lucian mocked at a *κάλλει καλλίστη*, so *ἡκούσθη ἡ ἀκοή* might also have appeared clumsy.

The Apocalypse, with its Semitisms, was the book that afforded the greatest temptations to the emendator: of course a grammatical error like *ἀρνίον ἑστηκὸς . . . ἔχων* was corrected to *ἑστηκὸς . . . ἔχον*, or *ἑπτὰ πνεύματα . . . ἀπεσταλμένοι* to *ἀπεσταλμένα*, or *ῥομφαία τῇ ἐξελεύσῃ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος* to *τῇ ἐκπορευομένῃ*. And it was not only for the sake of elegance of style that these things were done, but far more often with the intention of making the language clearer and more intelligible. The 'facilitating' variants,

¹ See p. 546.

² *Hist. Eccl.* i. 11.

³ John v. 8.

⁴ See p. 495.

⁵ Acts ii. 5.

especially those in the form of additions to the text, are Legion in the New Testament: innumerable *αὐτοῦ*, *αὐτῶν*, *ἐστίν*, *εἰσίν* etc. are due to this tendency, as well as words like the *θέλων* before or after *πιάσαι με* in 2. Cor. xi. 32, the *ὁ Ἰησοῦς* after *ἀκούσας δὲ* in Matt. iv. 12, or the *τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν* in Matt. vi. 15^a. Many of the above-mentioned changes, especially of conjunctions, have the same origin; where a *γάρ* appeared unsuitable or inappropriate according to the strict laws of logic, it was replaced by a *δέ* or an *οὖν*; and if later provincial idioms sometimes found their way into the New Testament text, it is scarcely less probable that copyists with grammatical culture (such as existed in considerable numbers not only as late as the fourth and fifth centuries) took great pains to polish the text according to the laws of the Schools, and altogether to make it more agreeable to read. In the Sinaiticus, for instance, the inconvenient *Ἰουδαῖοι* of Acts ii. 5, is simply omitted, and the Gospels too, as well as the Acts, were very much affected by this sort of emendation.

And indeed in their case it was the assimilation, remodelling, amplification and transposition of the text of one Evangelist to suit the parallel reports of another, that produced so many thousands of variants. These changes occur so systematically that we cannot be satisfied with the hypothesis—which would cover individual cases—that the memory of the scribe was unconsciously influenced by the similar passages he had read elsewhere. This evil habit, moreover, is not limited to the Gospels alone; for instance, the *ἐκ* between *πρωτότοκος* and *τῶν νεκρῶν* comes from Col. i. 18, and an interesting transmutation has taken place between Rev. i. 8, xxi. 6, and xxii. 13; the words ‘upon the sons of disobedience’ in Col. iii. 6 have found their way in from Eph. v. 6, and Gal. vi. 15 has been variously remodelled on verse v. 6. There is all too great a tendency to rectify the Old Testament quotations, which are often free enough in the New, according to the current Septuagint text. But the parallel accounts of the Gospels offer the most tempting field for this equalising process; and since it is notorious that the later Evangelists themselves introduced passages

from the earlier, it is often impossible, considering the amount of confusion among the manuscripts, to distinguish the original uniformity of text from that which was produced later, by artificial means. Thus the words in John xix. 20, 'it was written in Hebrew, and in Latin, and in Greek,' have intruded into Luke xxiii. 38; most manuscripts insert a whole verse—Matt. vi. 15—after Mark xi. 25, merely because this verse of Mark's corresponded with Matt. vi. 14; others, again, have inserted Matt. vii. 7 and 8 instead. Matt. xx. 7 was augmented from verse 4 by the words 'And whatsoever is right I will give you.' A desire for amplification and the rounding off of phrases is related to the above; many a copyist finds it hard to let 'the chief priests'¹ pass without 'the scribes'; eating without drinking²; praying³ without fasting. The liturgical language also exercised a certain influence, and not in the doxologies of the Epistles alone. The most famous instance is the introduction of the conclusion after the Lord's prayer in Matt. vi. 13; but the words 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' after the 'Tabitha, arise' of Acts ix. 40 (of which we have very early evidence) have a precisely similar ring.

Individual instances of such conformatory addition may have crept in accidentally from the margins, as when in Acts i. 3 we find the word *φαινόμενος* standing beside (or before) *ὀπτανόμενος* in the text; they were intended in the first place to assist in the elucidation of the text, not to make it more correct. But the copyist who included them in the text imagined that he was improving it, as was certainly the case with the man who in 1. Cor. vii. 3, replaced *ὀφειλή* by *ὀφειλομένη εὐνοία*, or *ἄνοια* by *διάνοια* in 2. Tim. iii. 9, or *ἀνταπόδοσις* by *μισθαποδοσία*, in Col. iii. 24.

It is impossible for us to guess the object of the 'corrector' in every case in which the variants were certainly intentional; a classification of the motives for 'emendation' would be a hopeless task. The fact itself is incontestable that for centuries the sacred text was handled in the most incredibly arbitrary manner, even though this tendency certainly decreased from one generation to another. If anything was

¹ E.g., Matt. xxvi. 3.

² E.g., Matt. vi. 25.

³ 1. Cor. vii. 5.

felt to be lacking in a given text the gap was filled without any hesitation; Matt. xxii. 14, for instance, is reinserted after xx. 15, in order to silence the malcontents still more effectually, and the Apostolic Decree of the Acts is raised to the dignity of a moral code by the addition of the fundamental principle: 'Do not unto others what thou wouldst not that men should do unto thee.' And in the First Epistle of John, v. 7 and 8, the words intended to support the doctrine of the Trinity, 'For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one,' have not even yet disappeared from most versions of the Bible. This interpolation, which is found over and over again in the Latin Church of Spain and Africa after the fourth century, crept into the Vulgate, and, at the end of the Middle Ages, even into a few Greek manuscripts. The author of this '*Comma Johanneum*' had no more intention of deceiving than the scribe who inserted 'And they worshipped him' in Luke xxiv. 52, or 'And was carried up into heaven' in xxiv. 51. The only difference lies in the fact that the latter was a Greek and the former a Latin. It is quite possible that we still have many Greek '*Commata*' of the same age even in our best editions.

It was very natural that many learned Fathers, from Origen onwards, should have laboured to stem the increasing corruption of the New Testament text, and should have corrected their own copies throughout after better and older manuscripts, thereby exerting an influence on others also towards the use of better and earlier readings in the preparation of new codices. But the result was a still more hopeless confusion, since no really sound critical principles existed. Even Origen, whose texts were regarded as standards by his own disciples and by a large part of the learned Greek world, did not by any means confine himself to removing the errors of others, but also introduced some of his own making; in fact, his authority helped a considerable number of undoubtedly false readings to a position of universal acceptance. In the '*Decretum Gelasii*' the Gospels of Lucian and Hesychius are rejected as falsified texts. This cautious proceeding is due to Jerome, who, in his preface

¹ See above, p. 564.

to the Four Gospels 'Ad Damasum,' speaks contemptuously of the Gospel manuscripts issued under the names of these men, and preferred by a few perverse persons; his words sound as though they had contained an unusually large number of interpolations. Now the successful labours of these two theologians¹ on the Old Testament text are well known; it is not incredible, then, that they should have undertaken a systematic emendation of the Gospels at least; but this is not rendered certain by such a statement as the above from Jerome, and still less would his judgment be binding on us. We can at present have no idea of what the text of Lucian's Gospel was like.

The fact that during this period of its development the New Testament text was overgrown to an amazing extent can only be denied by the ignorant. It places the party of dogma, however, in an embarrassing situation, because the deteriorations produced within the Church are treated by them with the same reverence as the genuine text. Fortunately for science, the earliest witnesses to its corruption are also in every instance witnesses against one another, so that as we possess them in enormous quantities, they help us not only to survey the different stages of corruption, but to trace back the original until we arrive within measurable distance of its starting-point.

§ 52. *The Witnesses to the Texts down to 1500 A.D., as they exist to-day*

1. The first place must here be given to the *quotations from the New Testament in the works of ecclesiastical writers*, because some of these have the advantage of a higher antiquity than any of the preserved manuscripts, and in their case we may generally be certain to what part of the world the quoted texts belonged. Now, the writings of the Fathers from the third century onwards are extremely rich in such quotations, and naturally we need only take the Latin Fathers into consideration as witnesses for the Latin text, the Syrian for the Syriac, and so on. Unhappily, the great work of throwing light upon this class of evidence is hardly begun. The 'Catenae'—Commentaries patched together from the utterances of earlier

¹ They lived about 300.

Fathers, and usually written all over the margins bordering the Bible texts—seem once more, we are glad to say, to be attracting the earnest attention of modern theologians; but the greater part of them have not yet been edited at all, and the Patristic texts themselves but unsatisfactorily, while the actual words of the Bible quotations are often the most untrustworthy part about them. Thus it is only in a few instances¹ that an exhaustive collection of this material and a critical study of it have been attempted. The greatest caution is necessary for this task: allusions to a Scripture sentence must of course be judged differently from direct quotation; but even with the latter, the words are often given simply from memory, and are then never to be trusted on individual points of expression. We may assume that an ecclesiastical writer would scarcely have looked up short and well-known Sayings in his Bible before making use of them. If the same author quotes a passage very frequently, and always in exactly the same words, we may take it that his memory is clinging to a written source. When the quotation is very long,² the idea of its repetition from memory is out of the question, and we may draw the same conclusion when we are given minute information as to the place where the quotation is to be found. Books of Logia, such as Cyprian's 'Testimonia' and Augustine's 'Speculum,' are of the highest value for textual criticism, inasmuch as they were doubtless put together from Bible manuscripts. The same is true of Commentaries which give portions of the text one after another before they explain them. Many traditional errors in the Text can be rectified by means of the commentary, because we can there see what was the form of the Text which the commentator was using.³ But the evidence of a 'Father' reaches its highest value when he actually refers to some peculiarity in the wording, or when he compares different readings one with another.

But even in cases where the author has neither quoted accurately, nor is the condition in which his words have come down to us above suspicion, the context will sometimes enable

¹ E.g., with Justin, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian.

² E.g., Matt. xxiv. 4^b-31 in Cyprian's *Ad Fortun.* 11.

³ Thus Origen and Chrysostom among the Greeks, Ambrosiaster and Jerome in the West, Ephraim among the Syrians.

us to decide with some certainty to which of two or three variant readings the writer gave his preference—e.g. whether in Gal. ii. 5 he read 'To whom we gave place for the moment,' or 'To whom we gave place, no, not for an hour.'¹ The very great value of the Catenae consists chiefly in the fact that they alone have preserved a number of fragments, from a literature otherwise lost beyond recall, which offer excellent materials for the determination of the time and *provenance* of interesting variants. It stands to reason that in this respect the writings of heretics and schismatics are quite as valuable to us as those of the most orthodox Fathers, and that the work of the inexperienced blunderer ranks with that of the eloquent master of ideas. Even inaccurate translations, like those of Irenaeus and Origen into Latin, may acquire special importance, since the translator, free as he is in his rendering of the quotations, shows us nevertheless how *he* read the passages in question in *his* Bible. Very often this is also the case with variants in inferior manuscripts; in Codices W and A, for instance, of Cyprian's 'Testimonia,' the original text (which is only retained uncorrupted in L) has been arbitrarily remodelled, but *in accordance with* the copyists' own versions of the Bible; thus the different copyists of Cyprian become witnesses to certain forms of the Latin translation which would otherwise have sunk into oblivion.

2. The systematic study of the second order of records, the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament Books, has been carried much further. These are divided according to the form of writing into the Uncial and Minuscule texts, but since few of the latter are earlier than the tenth century, their authority cannot rival that of the Uncial, for as a rule a manuscript is the more valuable the older it is. This rule, however, has its exceptions. A Minuscule manuscript of the twelfth century may have been copied with care and accuracy from a very old and good original, and similarly an Uncial manuscript of the seventh may have been carelessly copied from an indifferent original prepared five years before; in this case no one would prefer the latter. Thus the Ferrar group of Minuscule Gospel texts (so called because they were

¹ See above, p. 594.

production, it ought not to be estimated at so high a value as its discoverer is inclined to claim for it.

B (Vaticanus). An Athanasian Bible, either written about 331 (so O. von Gebhardt) or soon after 367 (A. Rahlfs¹); breaks off at verse ix. 14 of Hebrews, while a few leaves are also lost at the beginning and in the middle. Thus part of Hebrews, 1. and 2. Timothy, Titus, Philemon and the Apocalypse are altogether wanting. This precious possession was long jealously guarded in the Vatican Library, and only since 1867 have we become tolerably familiar—again through Tischendorf—with its readings; a photographic impression of it appeared in Rome in 1889. Its original text, which can still be easily distinguished in spite of some later retouching, is almost universally considered excellent.

A (Alexandrinus). Has been in England since 1628, and has there been frequently collated. In 1879 it was sumptuously edited at the expense of the British Museum. It also contains the whole Bible; in the New Testament (which includes the Apocalypse) we also find the First and Second Epistles of Clement, but of these the last pages are wanting, as well as the whole of the Psalms of Solomon, which originally formed the end. The bookbinder has robbed us of several marginal letters; and the larger part of Matthew, part of John and of 2. Corinthians are now missing from this Codex. A belongs to the second half of the fifth century. Its text differs very much in the different books, and is least serviceable in the Gospels.

C (Cod. Ephraemi Syri rescriptus). Now in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. It is probably as old as A, and also of Egyptian origin. It, too, was a complete Bible, though little of the Old Testament is now preserved. It contains rather more than half of the New, however, but in fragments scattered over every part of it. It is difficult to read, but repays the trouble, for it contains some quite original readings.

P and Q₁ are likewise good palimpsests, and consist in fragments of the Gospels from the sixth and fifth centuries. They are portions of the Isidorus Manuscript of Wolfenbüttel, which also contains fragments of the Gothic translation.

L. A Gospel Codex, dating indeed only from about 800, and written either carelessly or else by a scribe entirely ignorant of Greek, but founded nevertheless upon an excellent original. It is now in Paris.

Δ. Contains the four Gospels, almost without a break. It was written at St. Gall in the ninth century from an original containing

¹ *Theologische Literaturzeitung* for 1899, p. 556.

ing as it is a question of the Gospels, the Acts, the Pauline Epistles, or the Apocalypse—and even two different lectionaries, one of the Gospels and one of the Epistles, bear this number! On the other hand, one and the same MS. bears a different number for each different part of the New Testament: a 'Florentinus' of 1331, for instance, bears the number 367 for the Gospels, 146 for the Acts, 182 for the Pauline Epistles, and 23 for the Apocalypse! And in addition to this the English, following Scrivener, have a system of numeration differing in many ways from the German, which follows Gregory. Thus it may be seen that considerable patience and attention are required in order to estimate correctly all the different witnesses referred to in editions of the Texts, in Commentaries and in critical investigations. It must especially be borne in mind that several of the very best manuscripts have been preserved to us in very incomplete form; that the more comprehensive of them may have been copied from various different originals, so that some parts of them may be of greater value than others, and that one and the same scribe—where the work is not shared between several—sometimes appears as though tired out, and makes mistakes which never occur in other parts of his work. Valuable manuscripts have sometimes undergone two, three or even more wholesale corrections, but the corrections by no means always offer the best readings. (The work of the correctors is generally indicated in its chronological order by the addition of small letters, Arabic numerals, or asterisks, to the principal letters, e.g. \aleph_a , \aleph_b , H^1 , D^{**} , etc.)

Only two of the more important New Testament manuscripts appear to belong to the fourth century: the 'Sinaiticus' and the 'Vaticanus,' both containing the whole Bible.

\aleph (Sinaiticus). Discovered in the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai by C. von Tischendorf in 1844: published in 1862; now in St. Petersburg. This is the only Uncial MS. which contains the complete New Testament, even including the Epistle of Barnabas and the 'Shepherd' of Hermas. Even if it belongs to the 50 MSS. prepared by Eusebius for Constantine, and the same Egyptian scribe to whom we owe B assisted here and there in its

important cases all the other Greek manuscripts are against it need be no proof of its corruption, but may quite as well be due to the fact that it or its original (which some believe—somewhat fantastically—to have been the copy of Irenæus) was the only survivor from a period in which the New Testament text had not yet been subjected to the polishing which afterwards became universal. Nevertheless it is indisputable that D displays a tendency towards an arbitrary conformation of the Gospel texts and a loose treatment of its original, and although some of its peculiar readings may be very ancient, they need not for that reason be original; moreover, what cause have we to suppose that the corruption of the sacred texts had not already reached its maximum before the time of Irenæus? The tendency to explain, ending sometimes in mere paraphrase, and to amplify details is still more conspicuous in all examples of the 'Western' text than the tendency manifested, say, in B and its descendants to polish, to remove vulgarisms and to shorten prolixities. It will be wisest to recognise both, and to try in each individual case to ascertain the original text by the help of D and also of B, κ , etc.; neither the one nor the other presents us with a faultless original text, but still less is either a mere dust-heap. But the most essential thing for the advancement of research on this point is that the old translations which follow D should be systematically studied, established in their true relationship one with another and made use of for the reconstruction of their Greek originals. [Cf. R. Harris on the 'Codex Bezae' in 'Texts and Studies' (Cambridge, 1891); and B. Weiss and A. Harnack in the pamphlets mentioned on p. 453. A convenient collation of D has been made by E. Nestle, in his 'Novi Testamenti graeci Supplementum' (1896), pp. 7-66.]

3. (a) Translations, under certain circumstances, may render excellent service in the determination of the original wording of a text, e.g. when they are old and literal, when they allow us to perceive with some certainty how the Greek which underlies them ran, or when they date from a time of which our records are insufficient. *Ceteris paribus* the first-hand translations are to be preferred to the second-hand, the re-translations; but even the latter are not quite useless, unless we are already familiar with their originals. For instance, an Irish re-translation based on the 'Itala,' and belonging to the sixth century, would be more valuable than a direct Slavic translation of a Greek

text, of which there were a hundred other records. In fact the Old Slavic translation, dating at the earliest from the ninth century, is of no importance to the history of the text, and the same would be true of the Persian and Arabic versions even if we could be certain that they were founded on a Greek original. It is an established point that the Egyptian, Gothic, Ethiopian and Armenian translations are from the Greek, even though the Syrian text may from the first have had some influence on the two latter. They are of considerable antiquity : the Gothic, which is from the hand of Bishop Ulfilas, might be dated about 370, the Ethiopian not much later. We need not conclude that the whole New Testament was translated at the same time; when it was a question of gradual completion we may always assume that the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles are the oldest. Mesrobes is said to have presented the Armenians, some time after 431, with a Bible in their own tongue, and written in a peculiar alphabet. From the fourth century onwards the need of possessing the sacred books in the vernacular must have been the cause of their translation into the different dialects of Egypt; for after about 300 we find the Greek losing more and more ground in that country, till at last it is confined to the capital alone. Large portions of translations in the Theban or Sahidic (i.e. Upper Egyptian) dialects, in the Memphian or Boheiric (i.e. the dialect of the Delta), and in that of Fayoum and other Middle Egyptian districts, have been made known through the industry of scholars, especially Danes; the Boheiric has long played a great part in the Coptic Church, and an Arabic re-translation has actually sprung from it. But as yet the study of textual history has not derived great profit from all these translations. The Greek originals from which they are taken appear mostly to approach the ordinary text very nearly, and even where this is not the case, the incompleteness of the materials presented by them prevents our coming to any very definite conclusions. Moreover, the knowledge of Ethiopian, of Armenian, and, above all, of the Egyptian dialects—knowledge indispensable to the successful prosecution of such studies—is lacking in almost all those who are interested in them. P. DE LAGARDE possessed both knowledge and interest, but he died without

having carried out his great schemes. Thus there are only two translations left, the Latin and the Syrian, from the comparison of which with the Greek records we may expect, on account of their high antiquity and their comparative accessibility, to obtain a steady increase of knowledge.

(b) We are accustomed to distinguish two forms of the Latin translation: the *Itala* and the *Vulgate*; but it might be more accurate to speak of them as the pre-Hieronymite and the Hieronymite translations. For the 'Vulgate,' which only obtained this name in the Middle Ages, was for a long time by no means the 'Vulgar' (*vulgata* = ἡ κοινή): four centuries passed away before it succeeded in ousting its rival from ecclesiastical use. The relationship of the *Vulgate* to the *Itala* in the case of the Old and New Testaments respectively is very different, since Jerome translated the former afresh from the Hebrew, without any reference to the Septuagint, while he did no more than revise the Gospels superficially, and soon afterwards (in 382) the other Books of the New Testament also, at the request of Pope Damasus. He undertook no fresh translation of them, however, but at the most a fresh recension of the Latin text he already possessed. In so doing he contented himself as a rule with removing the more important deviations of the Latin from the Greek in favour of the latter, and preferred merely to choose from among various Latin versions the reading which followed the original most closely, without inserting anything of his own. But, of course, he never observed that he was only dealing with *a* Greek text, not with *the* Greek original; when any uncertainty arises he seeks the genuine New Testament only in the Greek ('*Graecae fidei—autoritati—reddidi Novum Testamentum*'). Thus the translation of Jerome, with the characteristics peculiar to it, is scarcely more than a record of one form of the Greek text of about the year 380. And even from this point of view it must be used with the greatest caution, because Jerome himself did not do his work consistently, and afterwards his text suffered an unusually marked deterioration by being subjected, naturally enough, to the influence of the traditional version. The different *Vulgate*-texts display just as many variants as the original MSS. Not

till 1200 did certain Parisian theologians exert themselves successfully in the establishment of a *textus receptus*, though unfortunately their Vulgate was not founded on the very best authorities. It is due to the influence of this edition that the numerous printed versions of the Vulgate belonging to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—including even those of Erasmus and of R. Stephanus—do not differ very materially from one another, and that it seemed an easy task to Pope Sixtus V. to publish, in fulfilment of the resolutions of the Council of Trent, an infallible Latin text in 1590—although, indeed, Clement VIII. silently replaced it two years later by one still more infallible. For those days these were quite respectable pieces of work, but the mixed text which even the present official version of the Roman Church represents is not sufficient for the purposes of critical research. The original text of Jerome can only be restored by means of the ancient manuscripts, among which the Codex Amiatinus, whose history we can trace with some accuracy, is of special interest.

The name of *Itala* for the pre-Hieronymite texts of the Latins was introduced, all unconsciously, by Augustine, who recommended in his 'De Doctrina Christiana' that the 'Itala' should be preferred to other Latin translations of the Scripture, because it had the advantage of being literal and intelligible at the same time. Thus he must have known several Latin translations (*latinae quaelibet*). By 'Itala' he probably meant that version which he had learned to know and value in Italy—that is, when staying at Milan with Bishop Ambrose. The translation current in his native African Church appeared to him inferior, principally because it kept so loosely to 'the words'—that is, to the Greek 'original text' of about 397. To us this particular lack of literalness would rather seem to speak in favour of the value of the translation. And in truth the Old Latin texts are raised to the position of witnesses to the original wording of the first order because, while they are exempted by the frequent awkwardness and barbarity of their Latin from all suspicion of having paraphrased or artificially altered the form of the original, they yet differ very markedly from the Greek texts still preserved. Yet they are certainly prepared from very ancient

manuscripts. For Cyprian undoubtedly quotes from a Latin Bible, about the year 250. Still, a number of the most important questions are not yet answered: (1) whether Tertullian used Latin Bible-texts about the year 200; (2) whether there were several independent translations or only one, which later became very much corrupted, or rather 'emendated,' and (3) whether, if this were the case, Africa or Italy was its birthplace.

In any case, the twenty-seven Books of the New Testament were not rendered into Latin all together by one translator. Consequently the different books might have different histories; the oldest Latin text of the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles might come from Africa, while perhaps the Epistle to the Hebrews and the later Catholic Epistles might have a different origin. But it is also possible that the Gospels were translated at several places in the West at about the same time, and that the similarity between all the transmitted texts may be explained by the mingling they underwent in later times. On the other hand, the Pauline Epistles might only have been translated once, and the many different forms of this translation have been due to its further distribution throughout the West, and especially to its frequent comparison by learned scribes with Greek manuscripts. But for the present the greatest caution is required in dealing with this question. We possess indeed countless New Testament quotations in the Old Latin authors, —these have yet to be restored to their original form according to the best manuscripts; we possess, further, a rich store of fourth century and later manuscripts (both complete and fragmentary) of the pre-Hieronymite text—these also have to be thoroughly examined as to their age, birth-place (to be deduced by comparison with the quotations of the Fathers) and mutual relationship, with constant reference, too, to all the non-Latin texts. But first and foremost they require to be published in complete and authentic form. Then perhaps a history of the 'Itala' may be written (for it is to be hoped that confusion will not be worse confounded by the sacrifice of this now well-established name to mistaken ideas of correctness) by the

help of which the page still almost blank in the history of the Greek Text from the second to the fourth century may be satisfactorily filled. Remarkable instances of agreement between Latin and Oriental texts, as against all, or almost all, other authorities, show that this labour would be well rewarded, even—nay, especially—if it resulted in the definite destruction of certain exaggerated expectations.

The most valuable services in the investigation of the *Itala* and the Vulgate were rendered in the eighteenth century by G. Bianchini ('*Evangelium quadruplex latinæ versionis antiquæ*,' 1749) and P. Sabatier ('*Bibliorum S. latinæ versiones antiquæ*,' ed. 2, 1751), the latter an attempt at a complete restoration of the Old Latin translations by means of manuscripts and quotations of the Fathers. In modern times the work has been carried on in Germany by E. Ranke, H. Rönisch, L. Ziegler, P. Corssen, J. Haussleiter, and E. von Dobschütz; in Italy by G. Amelli; in England by J. Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, W. Sanday, and H. J. White; in Norway by J. Belsheim; in France by L. Delisle, P. Batiffol and S. Berger (in his excellent '*Histoire de la Vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du moyen âge*,' 1893). A very fine edition of the Vulgate has been appearing in Oxford since 1889, entitled '*Novum Testamentum latine secundum editionem S. Hieronymi*,' edited by Wordsworth and White; but only the first volume is as yet completed; the '*Old-Latin Biblical Texts*,' i.-iv. (Oxford, 1883, 1886, 1888 and 1897), contain also excellent reprints of *Itala* manuscripts. F. C. Burkitt, in his article on '*The Old-Latin and the Itala*' in '*Texts and Studies*,' iv. 3, 1896, asserts that what Augustine understood by *Itala* was Jerome's revision of the Gospels, so that *Itala* and Vulgate would in reality mean the same thing; but sufficient evidence for this theory is not produced.

3. (c) The history of the Syriac New Testament is similar to that of the Latin. A translation rich in peculiar readings into the Syriac of Palestine must for the present be left out of account, because, in the first place, we are not certain of its age (the manuscripts do not go back beyond the eighth century), and, in the second, the equally important question has not yet been decided as to whether this Jerusalemic document is derived directly from a Greek manuscript or is remodelled from an Edessenic text, perhaps with reference to the Greek. The Syrian Vulgate has been commonly known

since the ninth or tenth century by the name of 'Peshitto,' meaning 'the simple,' probably either in the good sense of 'not tampered with,' or in the deprecatory of 'unlearned,' i.e. not accurately grounded on the original, but possibly too in that of ἀπλῆ as opposed to *hexaplaris*. This, however, can only be ascertained from the history of the Old Testament, and indeed the Old Testament is the older portion of this translation. About the year 500 Bishop Philoxenus of Hierapolis caused the Peshitto to be completed and improved according to certain Greek examples by a Rural Bishop named Polycarp, because in it the New Testament differed very markedly from that of the Greek Bible, partly in the meaning of several individual passages and partly through the absence of four of the Catholic Epistles—an uncertainty which caused distress to the Monophysitic Syrians. But since even then there still remained much that was doubtful, the monk Thomas of Heraclea, in the year 616, finished the assimilation of the Syrian Bible to that of his Alexandrian brethren by a translation of unexampled accuracy, which succeeded in displacing the original translation of Philoxenus altogether, and the Peshitto in part, among the Monophysites. Or, at any rate, wherever the Peshitto was still used, it borrowed the books it had so long lacked from this later translation. But portions of the Peshitto have been very freely incorporated with the 'Heracleensis' as we now have it, both from marginal notes and from the memory of copyists; whereas the opposite process has not been nearly so frequent. In fact, since the beginning of the Middle Ages the Peshitto has been propagated with surprising fidelity. We can distinguish two classes of Peshitto manuscripts—one West-Syrian¹ and the other East-Syrian²; within each of these the variants are not numerous, and the classes themselves do not differ very considerably. Thus by about 431 the Syrian Vulgate is as far advanced as the Latin at about 1200.

But the Peshitto of 431 has yet another translation behind it; the quotations of Aphraates and Ephraim³ from the New Testament differ so constantly and so characteris-

¹ Melchitic, Jacobitic and Maronitic.

² Nestorian.

³ See pp. 539 fol.

tically from the wording of the Peshitto, in spite of a great deal of agreement which cannot be accidental, that we might take the present Peshitto simply as a Recension, based as far as possible on an emendated Greek text, of an older—probably third century—translation. This older text naturally has the greater interest for us. But most valuable of all would be the authentic text of the Syrian ‘Diatessaron,’¹ which springs from yet older sources, and which, moreover, as might have been expected, has strongly influenced the text of the separate Gospels. But we can scarcely hope for a complete reconstruction of this.

The publication of the actual Old Syrian New Testament was begun in 1858 by W. Cureton, after whom the translation of the Gospels—unfortunately preserved but in very fragmentary form—was named *Syrus Curetonianus*; another and perhaps still older text—known as the *Sinaiticus* from its having been discovered in a palimpsest belonging to the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai—has, however, very few omissions, and was published in 1894 by Bensly, R. Harris and Burkitt. These two texts have a number of peculiar readings in common, but the *Sinaiticus* alone contains some of almost greater interest; unfortunately, however, theological considerations bore a large part in the moulding of this latter text, and for the present we must beware of exaggerating its value as a witness. The history of the Syriac Text of the New Testament is, in fact, still more involved than that of the Latin.

Cf. the ‘*Evangelium Hierosolymitanum*’ edited by P. de Lagarde in the ‘*Bibliotheca Syriaca*,’ in which two manuscripts discovered on Mount Sinai by Agnes S. Lewis and Margaret D. Gibson in 1892 and 1893 are made use of. Also ‘*The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels*’ (1899: fragments of the Pauline Epistles and the Acts, belonging to the same type of translation), edited by G. William in the ‘*Anecdota Oxoniensia*’ (1893) and by Mrs. Lewis in ‘*Studia Sinaitica*,’ vi. 1897. For the study of the Peshitto the edition of the Dutch scholars Leusden and Schaaf, entitled ‘*Novum Testamentum syriacum*’ (1709) is still indispensable; it has a Latin translation and is furnished with an array of variants.—The *Heracleensis* was edited

¹ See pp. 493 fol.

by Joseph White between 1778 and 1803; the most important supplement to it is the 'Apocalypse of St. John in a Syriac Version hitherto unknown,' edited by J. Gwynn (1897).—The Diatessaron is partially preserved in the Armenian translation of Ephraim's *Commentary*; see the Latin version by J. B. Aucher and G. Moesinger entitled 'Evangelii concordantis Expositio facta a S. Ephraemo' (1876). The Arabic and Latin versions of the Diatessaron are less trustworthy. All the material is turned to account in Zahn's 'Forschungen zur Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons,' i., 1881, and iv., 1891, pp. 225–46; see also his 'Gesch. des. N.T.lichen Kanons,' vol. ii. pp. 530–56. The material of the Curetonianus has been made accessible to all by F. Bähgen in 'Evangelienfragmente des griechischen Texts des Cureton'schen Syrsers wiederhergestellt' (1885); that of the Sinaiticus by A. Merx in 'Die 4 kanon. Evgl. nach ihrem ältesten bekannten Texte; eine Übersetzung des syrischen im Sinaikloster gefundenen Palimpsesthandschrift' (1897). A list of the Variants in the Sinaiticus and the Curetonianus is given by C. Holzhey in 'Die neuentdeckte Cod. Sinait. untersucht' (1896). For a criticism of the new text see Wellhausen's 'Nachrichten der Göttinger Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft' (1895, no. 1).—As yet no universal adoption of symbols to prevent vexatious confusion has been found practicable with the different Syriac texts.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT RECENSIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXT
SINCE 1516

[Cf. E. Reuss: 'Bibliotheca Novi Testamenti graeci,' 1872: the most comprehensive description ever made of the printed editions of the New Testament down to about 1860.]

§ 53. *The Formation of the New Testament 'Textus receptus' (to about 1630)*

1. From the moment when the Greek New Testament began to profit by the invention of printing—and it is significant that this was not until the sixteenth century—a new period dawns in the history of its Text. The form of the New Testament interests us no longer, because only the same long-established form was applied to the sacred texts as to all other books, and also because its peculiarities no longer exert any influence upon the contents. It might seem at first sight as though all the former deplorable results of production on a large scale would but be increased a thousandfold by printing. But in reality the new method of multiplication did not by any means result in creating a still greater dissimilarity between the texts, but, on the contrary, in drawing them more and more closely together. A few errors, unknown before, may indeed have found their way into the New Testament text since 1500, through the carelessness of editors or the unskilfulness of printers; but it was far more difficult for these to maintain themselves in such a text, before the public opinion of hundreds of owners and readers, than in a manuscript never accessible to more than a few, in which error and truth might be perpetuated side by side from one generation

to another. The publisher who sent out a thousand similar copies of a New Testament into the world together was obliged to proceed with greater care than a Calligrapher of the old times, who always had the Corrector to fall back upon. A scholar of the humanist period was, in any case, anxious to draw up his text according to the oldest and most correct original to be had, and the comparison of different manuscripts, which was here unavoidable, naturally roused the critical impulse. Thus we find Erasmus choosing between several available copies (or rather readings); others gave their readers plentiful materials to choose from, and though custom and dogma did not at first permit the growth of these fresh shoots, the fact remains that with the multiplication of the Greek New Testament by means of printing, a reaction set in, a backward movement towards older and better texts—although indeed it was long before this became a conscious, methodical search after the oldest and best text to be found. The printed editions of the New Testament, in so far as they really deserve mention—that is, possess a certain independence of their own—are no longer mere reproductions, but recensions, versions of the text founded on critical principles.

2. The *editio princeps* of the Greek Testament was prepared by Erasmus in 1516 for the bookseller Froben in Basle. He based it upon very late manuscripts: for the Apocalypse he used one of the twelfth century which broke off at verse xxii. 16, and made up the missing portion simply by re-translating from the Latin text! Even the subsequent editions of 1519–22–27–35 are not substantially improved; they still contain readings without any manuscript foundation.¹ The Complutensian Polyglot (giving both the Latin and Greek texts, and in the Old Testament, as far as possible, the Hebrew also) contains far more valuable work. It was issued at Alcalá (=Complutum) by Spanish scholars under the leadership of Cardinal Ximenes. The New Testament (in Greek and Latin) was ready as early as January 1514, but the complete Bible did not attain publicity until 1521. Although Erasmus might have learnt much from it, its

¹ E.g., 1. Peter iii. 20: ἀναξ ἐξεδέχero instead of ἀπεδέχero.

Greek text was not drawn from much better sources than his own.

3. Both editions have often been reprinted, generally with fresh errors in the printing. But the editions of the Parisian bookseller, Robert Estienne (Stephanus), possess a higher value, especially the third (1550), called the '*Editio Regia*.' This man profited by the preparatory labours of his stepfather, Colinaeus, and was assisted in the comparison of manuscripts by his learned son Henri; really valuable manuscripts, such as Codex L for the Gospels, were employed by him, and he even ventured to insert a few variants in the margin. In the text he follows the Erasman of 1535 almost exclusively, except for the Gospels and Acts—and even recurs to it occasionally in passages where he had before preferred the better readings of the Complutensis. The Genevan reprint of the '*Regia*,' dated 1551, is famous on account of the division of the chapters into verses which Stephanus introduced into it. This arrangement, in spite of its serious defects, was universally accepted, with but insignificant alterations, from the seventeenth century onwards, for although Pope Sixtus V. had adopted a different system of division in his official edition of the Vulgate, his successor Clement VIII. had returned to the system of Stephanus in his edition of 1592. The arrangement, especially when each verse is printed separately, has rendered a fatal assistance towards the conception of the New Testament as a string of disconnected mottoes and oracles. Still more ambitious resources than those of his predecessors were employed by the Calvinist Theodore Beza, who printed many Græco-Latin New Testaments from 1565 onwards. Besides the manuscripts mentioned on p. 605, he even made comparisons with older translations and quotations in the Fathers, and in his notes often gives valuable hints to textual critics, though he scarcely dared seriously to alter the text; the text of Stephanus, indeed, which he took as his model, may almost be said to be better than his own.

4. The following century produced nothing but reprints, of which indeed scarcely one agreed word for word with the model; but, after all, the existing editions did not differ so

very widely one from another, not even the Complutensian from the Erasmian. The process of mingling has now begun, with the result that Beza's text sets the standard more and more. But the brothers Elzevier of Leyden had the greatest success among the publishers of these New Testament texts. Their editions (from 1624 onwards) were recommended by their elegant form and clear print, and took possession first of Holland and the other Reformed countries, and finally, under the sway of Pietism (about 1700), of the Lutheran territory as well. These texts of the Elzeviers, which, moreover, do not correspond entirely with one another or with their numerous reprints, and which make quite arbitrary though trifling alterations in the Stephano-Bezan text, are the type of the so-called '*Textus receptus*'¹—that is, of the universally accepted version, which Protestant scholasticism in particular has naïvely regarded as the original and literally inspired text of the New Testament.

§ 54. *The Attacks on the 'Textus receptus'*
(down to circa 1830)

1. Doubts as to the trustworthiness of the *Textus receptus*—which were indeed bound to arise as soon as the polyglot editions of Antwerp, Paris or London were compared with it—were soon expressed, though timidly at first. Reprints were made of it, but at the same time variants were collected, and more or less clear references made to their superiority. The place of honour in this respect is due to Stephan Curcellæus the Arminian, who in 1658 drew up an edition of the New Testament in Amsterdam, in which, though he followed the Elzevier edition (only bracketing the '*Comma Johanneum*,' 1. John v. 7 and 8), he yet furnished a very considerable stock of variant readings. These he collected from older editions, from commentaries, and from good manuscripts not previously collated; some are even pure conjecture, taken, for instance, from H. Stephanus, I. Casaubon, and D. Heinsius; for he considered that even though the authority for such readings was not equal to that of readings supported by the evidence of ancient manuscripts, some of

¹ Known by the symbol σ , the Greek initial letter of Stephanus.

them were yet so strongly recommended by internal probability that in the mere interests of truth they ought not to be despised. The readings of the *Textus vulgatus*, he contended, were at least *not always* better than the variants; the next thing to do would be to add *all* the variants to the text, and then a sound judgment might be trusted to find out the correct reading. He gives a very reasonable opinion, too, as to the rise and religious significance of the variations of the text, and it is to be regretted that he was not able to carry out his plan of making use of the far richer material he had collected in the course of his work, in a larger edition. English theologians, although they entertained a greater respect for the *receptus*, achieved collections of variants of far greater exhaustiveness, especially owing to their use of the Oriental translations. Of these we may specify J. Fell, 1675, and J. Mill, 1707. The Low-German Gerhard of Maestricht next showed in his edition (1711) that Curcellæus and R. Simon had not written in vain, for the question as to the best use to be made of the variants already occupies his mind. Textual criticism, which Simon had made the order of the day, obtained a remarkably brilliant promoter in J. J. Wettstein of Basle, who laboured from 1713 onwards at the improvement of the traditional texts, thereby incurring the suspicion of heresy. At last he was obliged to take refuge with the Arminians in Holland, and there, shortly before his death,¹ was able to complete his life's work, the '*Novum Testamentum graecum cum variis Lectionibus et Commentario, II Tomis*,' which has retained its value down to the present day. He, too, held in all essentials to the late text of the printed editions; but he did not leave his readers in any doubt as to which readings he himself preferred to those standing in the text, and did not shun the deductions which his stock of variants, much improved by his unwearied industry in collection and his thirst for accuracy, seemed to impose upon him.

2. But even in Wettstein's lifetime, editions had appeared in which the *Textus receptus* was forced to give way on many points to the tradition embodied in the manuscripts. That philologist of genius, Richard Bentley, attempted to construct a

¹ † 1754.

New Testament according to the best records, and in the 22nd chapter of the Apocalypse, which he published in 1720 as a tentative effort, he abandoned the *Textus receptus* in over forty places. Unfortunately, however, he did not follow up this first essay, and the editions of Wace (1729) and Harwood (1776), in which the manuscripts were seriously preferred to the printed versions—though naturally with much one-sidedness—were either decried or ignored by the orthodox party. But J. A. Bengel¹ of Würtemberg secured a far greater influence, in spite of violent opposition. His New Testament, first published in 1734, and often reprinted since, removed a number of undoubted mistakes in the *receptus*. His alterations are almost always correct—they are only far too few. But he had other merits besides his boldness (which was all the more effective because of his exegetical insight and his well-known piety): even those variants which were not 'admitted' he classified according to their degrees of excellence, and did not allow his judgment to depend on the caprices of critics or the chance results of statistics, but formed the manuscript records into groups, and, instead of isolated examples, ranged the *families of texts* together—no matter whether they were composed of a hundred manuscripts or only of two—and examined the evidence they supplied. J. S. Semler² took up this happy idea and carried it yet further, thinking himself justified first and foremost in distinguishing a Syriac and an Egyptian 'Recension' of the Greek text. This was the starting-point for the true historical study of the texts.

Fortunately the effort to increase the apparatus, to advance the knowledge of the ancient texts of the New Testament, did not cease during this clearing process. Danish as well as German scholars rendered valuable services at that time in this direction. The first master of textual criticism capable of using the material at hand for a systematic emendation of the New Testament text appeared now to have arrived in the person of J. J. Griesbach,³ Professor of the University of Jena. He created almost a new *Textus receptus*, published in numerous editions from 1774 onwards, besides which his other pamphlets and his commentaries on the history of the text

¹ † 1752.² † 1791.³ † 1812.

ought not to be forgotten. He proceeded in as conservative a spirit as possible, so that there can be no idea of a real downfall of the old *receptus*. He distinguished the readings worth considering from those of undoubted authenticity, and noted them in the margin. Moreover, he always believed it possible to defend the best text by exegesis. Going further along the path marked out by Bengel and Semler, he distinguished three classes of texts, the Occidental, the Alexandrian, and the Byzantine; but while displaying a healthy preference for the first two, he defined his families far too hastily, far too much in general and abstract terms. Griesbach was doubtless in the right as compared with his adversaries, one of whom, the Saxon C. F. Matthäi, in Moscow, attempted with the blindest prejudice to establish the New Testament text from certain late Greek manuscripts—thus from the very worst sources; while another, A. Scholz, a Catholic of Bonn, sought in a very similar manner to identify the Byzantine text with that of the primitive Churches of Asia, and—unlike Matthäi on this point—often worked exceedingly carelessly. But Griesbach himself steered his course too much according to the *Textus receptus*, which he only sought to amend by making compromises, instead of ruthlessly expelling it from the domain it had usurped. Science was bound to pass on beyond him in her forward march.

§ 55. *The Downfall of the 'Textus receptus' and the latest Textual Criticism*

[Cf. A. Rüdger, 'Die N.T.liche Textkritik seit Lachmann' (1892, 97 pp.)]

1. In 1830, the celebrated philologist Carl Lachmann¹ undertook the task of drawing up a New Testament text strictly according to the approved methods of philological criticism. The first small edition appeared in 1831; a larger one, produced in collaboration with P. Buttmann of Berlin, between 1842 and 1850. The printed editions and the whole of the Byzantine group are ignored; it is left to

¹ † 1851.

the oldest Greek and Latin manuscripts to decide, not how the original text ran, but which text was most widely distributed in the Greek Church before the year 400. There was something sublime in this renunciation of the highest aim, and indeed the hope can no longer be cherished that the complete loss of all the autographs can ever be compensated for by the results of textual criticism. Lachmann's merit lies in his having demolished the 'infallible' text once and for all, and in having set up a new and attainable goal and clearly pointed out the way to it. He himself, however, did not attain it: first, because he left out of account at least one whole class of valuable witnesses—the quotations from the Fathers and the translations (except the Latin)—and also that of the later Greek manuscripts, which are at any rate not wholly to be despised; and, secondly, because the knowledge of the all-important authorities was not sufficiently advanced in his time.

2. The Leipzig Professor Constantin von Tischendorf¹ devoted the whole energies of his life to the newly imposed task. As early as 1841 he issued one New Testament, and countless others followed, their texts differing very markedly one from another; the best he left behind him in the so-called eighth edition, 'Critica Major,' 1864-72, which was supplemented by C. R. Gregory.² Here we have a comparatively good text, as complete a collection as possible of the variants to each verse, and a careful description of all the textual evidence extant. The work will long be indispensable for students in this department. It is true that the text thus presented is again only that of the fourth century, for Tischendorf decidedly prefers the oldest Greek Uncials; and in the supplementary apparatus there is much to improve, to add to, and to rearrange. But without Tischendorf this apparatus would never have been brought together, and a number of manuscripts, among them the two oldest Greek texts, have become accessible to science through him alone. It was perhaps due rather to his thirst for applause, which always drove him to use up his new treasures with undue haste in the recension of the New Testament text, than to his

¹ † 1874.

² See p. 576.

prejudices in dealing with fundamental historical questions, that, in spite of his enthusiasm and his rare endowment for such work, he did not attain to so much permanence in it as, in every phase of his development, he believed himself to have attained.

3. The co-operation of the modern English theologians in this department has been of special value. The first place must be given to S. P. Tregelles,¹ who began his great edition of the Greek New Testament, based on the oldest authorities, in 1857, and only completed it after he had become paralysed. His text stands midway between Lachmann's and Tischendorf's; with far richer materials he seeks to carry out the principles of Lachmann consistently, but in so doing takes an important step in advance: when two readings are supported by equal evidence he does not reject the one, but draws attention to the uncertainty between them within the text itself.

The edition of the Cambridge Professors B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort (1881)² carries this system of alternative readings to a still finer point. In vol. i. they give the text, a statement of their critical principles and premisses, and a list of third- and fourth-rate readings, which cannot seriously enter into competition with those offered in the text or on the margin, but which deserve special consideration on account of their good and early attestation, or else on grounds of internal probability. The end is formed by an index of the Old Testament quotations. The second volume contains a detailed Introduction to New Testament textual criticism, and a justification of the authors' innovations. The Appendix is mainly devoted to a technical commentary on the 'select readings' of vol. i. A complete supplementary apparatus is not given, but the history of individual typical passages is carefully examined, and, based on these, a genealogical tree is prepared, in the branches of which all the records extant find a place. This enables them to be estimated, not as individual records according to the mere accident of their age,

¹ † 1875.

² *The New Testament in the original Greek*; a new edition appeared in 1898 of vol. i. and in 1896 of vol. ii., containing a few corrections and additions.

but according to their place in the family tree. The connection with Bengel is more than a mere superficial one, though the difference in result shows in a most satisfactory manner how far the history of the text has advanced since his time. Westcott and Hort consider it necessary to distinguish: (1) a neutral text, mainly represented by B, and still free from characteristic deformities; (2) an Occidental text, which had already spread from Antioch to Rome before the year 200, became the foundation for the Itala and the Peshitto, and is plentifully represented in the quotations of early Western Fathers and also in early manuscripts such as the Gospel-Codex D: it has a tendency towards glossing and paraphrasing; (3) an Alexandrian text, represented specially by α and A, and showing attempts at polishing and the eradication of grammatical errors; and (4) a late Syriac text, more and more widely distributed from the year 300 onwards, and at last reigning alone, with Constantinople as its head-quarters; it arose through the mingling of all the others and has a special tendency towards the removal of difficulties. Naturally No. 4 stands at the bottom of the scale, while what is peculiar to 2 and 3, if not vouched for elsewhere, should also be rejected. But unfortunately the representatives of 2 and 3 often follow a parallel course, and it is also extremely uncertain whether we may venture to speak of a neutral text at all.

4. A survey of the present New Testament text, the result of such gigantic efforts of unwearied industry and of the best-trained learning, presents no very encouraging picture. The authorities of the nineteenth century still differ very considerably amongst themselves—how much, may be conveniently studied in 'The Resultant Greek Testament' of R. F. Weymouth (1886). The same service is rendered within humbler limits by the best of the Pocket Editions, by O. Von Gebhart's second stereotyped edition entitled 'Das Neue Testament griechisch nach Tischendorf's letzter Recension, und deutsch nach dem revidirten Luthertext, mit Angabe abweichender Lesarten beider Texte und ausgewählten Parallelstellen' (Leipzig, 1884), and by the marvellously cheap edition published in 1898 by the 'Württembergische Bibelanstalt.' In this latter E. Nestle bases his text upon Tischendorf, Westcott and Weymouth, on

the principle of adopting such readings as a majority of the three authorities are agreed upon, while noting the deviations of the minority regularly in his footnotes. But what constitutes the peculiarity of his edition is that he feels bound to include certain readings from manuscripts which had not found favour with any of the other great editors; in fact, in the historical Books this part of his supplementary material is often the fullest. Moreover, a comparison, say, between the texts of the Acts adopted first by Hilgenfeld in his 'Acta Apostolorum graece et latine sec. antiquissimos testes' (1899), and next by B. Weiss in his 'Textkritische Untersuchungen über das N. T.' (1894-99), shows how slight is the unanimity of critics even in fundamental questions; the Codex D, which the one writer regards as by far the most valuable authority, is considered by the other to be unusually corrupt, and in his reliance on B, Weiss decidedly outbids the English. Practically, only one point is admitted by all the different schools of criticism—the worthlessness of the *Textus receptus*; otherwise the only department in which tolerable unanimity has been attained is that of the Pauline Epistles. With the other Books of the New Testament we are at this moment further removed from such a goal than ever, partly because the interests of the so-called Higher Criticism interfere with the progress of the Lower. Thus we see the British Bible Society calmly continuing to advertise the exploded *Receptus*, but even most of those who use worthier editions have no conception of the uncertainty that still clings to the text of the New Testament at innumerable points, nor of the number of mistakes on which the translations, revered by many as Holy Scripture, are based.

5. An effectual furtherance of the work of textual criticism—that is, the establishment of confidence in the form of the text already won by criticism—may perhaps best be expected from a more exhaustive study of the oldest versions and of the writings of the Fathers. There is little to be hoped from the discovery of new Greek manuscripts, unless indeed papyrus remains from the first centuries, containing the original Greek text, can be found. But the research into the Itala is only in its infancy; that into the Syriac Bible is

scarcely further advanced. The individual ecclesiastical writers must be examined side by side with the manuscripts, and the text they used must be inserted in its place in the manuscripts known to us. But the hope that we may in every case recover the original text by this means is quite extinguished. Internal criticism, again, has its place as well as external; a reading supported by excellent evidence must nevertheless be rejected if one with apparently little in its favour is yet vouched for by the context, or by the style and thought of the author in question. The exegete must no longer treat the work of the textual critic as outside his province, but ought on the contrary to put the rules of textual criticism into practice himself—not, however, if he is one for whom the orthodox dogma forms, though perhaps unconsciously, the touchstone for the reading to be admitted. Under certain circumstances even conjecture may be permissible. When the original reading is only supported by two independent witnesses in one place, in another only by one, why should it not be supported by none at all (among those that we possess) in a third? In the very oldest times, into which none of our records of the New Testament extend, the text was often copied by quite unskilful hands, and it was precisely at that time that it was handled most freely, and that what the copyist did not understand or did not think suitable was remodelled without hesitation according to what was more convenient or seemed easier to say. Explanatory, softening or edifying additions were admitted with special readiness into the text, which, as we know, had not yet been pronounced sacrosanct; for Col. ii. 18, for instance, nothing but corrupted texts are preserved, either making no sense at all or else consisting of the worthless conjectures of ancient copyists, and in Rom. vii. 25 the first part of the verse at any rate is an inadmissible gloss. Now, these interpolations can be perceived by the eye of a practised student, for where it is a question of the distortion of the original form, a happy insight may guess just as well in the case of a sacred as of a profane text what first stood at a certain place and was then superseded by an early corruption. But prudence and moderation are here a *sine qua non*. Conjecture may

never simply substitute an agreeable for a disagreeable version; it is merely called upon to supply the place of what is absolutely impossible, and the limits of what is possible in matters of thought and expression are extremely varied according to the literary attainments and the temperaments of different writers. Certainly a conjecture has some claim to acceptance in the text if it is able to explain the manner in which the traditional reading arose out of what it presumes to have been the oldest. This is the case, for instance, with Cobet's proposal to read ἡδίοινα instead of πλ[ε]ίοινα in Heb. xi. 4, because in the old Uncial hand the forms of the two words are extremely alike; or with that of Bois, to read καὶ τῆς ἐπιφανείας αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ κήρυξον τὸν λόγον in 2 Tim. iv. 1 fol., on the ground that the copyist who introduced τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν and τὴν βασιλείαν had not perceived the reference of the genitives to what followed, and had understood them merely as the objects of διαμαρτύρομαι. Still, the traditional versions are not absolutely inadmissible in these cases, and as yet not a single conjecture has found unanimous acceptance in the New Testament text, even with those who do not make a principle of rejecting them.

At a time when the secret of the Higher Criticism appears to many to lie in the dissection and piecing together of the New Testament, there is some danger that in the Lower Criticism also, inventive addition and arbitrary omission may gain the upper hand; in Holland the task of re-creating the text in this way is already in high favour, and in France and Germany, too, a few critics are beginning to practise the art. J. M. S. Baljon has made a tolerably complete collection of the material in question in the notes to his 'Novum Testamentum graece' (Groningen, 1898); but the modest use which he makes of such conjectures in constituting his text, and the cautious reserve manifested by all exegetes of repute in dealing with these proposals, leave room for the hope that this branch of science will not be quite discredited by the irresponsible proceedings of certain omniscient experts. We are still aware that in an obscure path the *ars nesciendi* is the best; we know that our ultimate aim—

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